Design and Optimization of Micro-Strip Patch Antennas for Wireless Communication Systems– A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

This literature review offers a comprehensive analysis of the design and optimization of microstrip patch antennas for wireless communication systems, drawing insights from a variety of research papers. It examines diverse approaches aimed at enhancing antenna performance and functionality. Key topics explored include optimization of resonant frequency, design of antenna arrays, and bandwidth enhancement. Noteworthy optimization techniques, such as genetic algorithms and artificial neural networks, are discussed, highlighting their effectiveness in achieving superior antenna performance. Application-specific solutions tailored to areas such as military communication and RFID systems are emphasized. The review underscores the significant role played by optimization techniques in achieving desired performance metrics and identifies future research directions, including multi-objective optimization, investigation of robustness and reliability, and integration with advanced technologies. Overall, this literature review provides valuable insights into the state-of-the-art in microstrip patch antenna design and optimization, guiding future research endeavors in this dynamic and rapidly evolving field.

Keywords: Micro – Strip Patch Antenna, literature review

1. Introduction

Microstrip patch antennas, also known as patch antennas, are popular in wireless communications because of their low cost, ease of fabrication, and compact size [1]. These antennas typically consist of a metal foil patch on a printed circuit board with a ground plane, offering a lightweight and low-profile design. These antennas consist of a radiating patch, typically made of a conductive material like copper or gold, that is mounted on a dielectric substrate, as well as a ground plane. FR4, Rogers, or Taconic, materials with a low dielectric constant, typically form the substrate to minimize signal losses [2]. The radiating patch may be designed in a variety of forms, including rectangular, circular, or square, and can be fed via several methods, such as microstrip line, coaxial probe, or aperture coupling. The selection of the feeding technique and the configuration of the patch have a substantial impact on the radiation properties of the antenna, including its gain, bandwidth, and directivity.

Resonance operates in microstrip patch antennas, selecting the patch dimensions to resonate at a specific frequency. The effective dielectric constant of the substrate, the patch dimensions, and the distance between the patch and the ground plane determine the resonant frequency. You can tune the antenna's frequency of operation to meet the requirements of various wireless communication systems, including Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, GPS, and satellite communication, by adjusting these parameters.

Microstrip patch antennas are now essential components in modern wireless communication systems because of their multiple benefits and flexible uses, as well as their small size, lightweight, and effectiveness [1]. These antennas are flat structures, usually made on a dielectric substrate, consisting of a radiating patch on one side and a ground plane on the other. The dielectric substance divides the patch and ground plane, allowing for customization to achieve specific features [3]. These antennas specifically function in several frequency bands, making them ideal for applications such as 5G and IoT. They provide benefits such as significant amplification, an extensive frequency range, and compact dimensions, fulfilling the requirements for enhanced performance across a wide range of frequencies. Microstrip patch antennas are constantly developing to suit the demands of new technologies, including novel elements like slots, parasitic strips, and corporate feed mechanisms to improve performance and efficiency. Due to their adaptability, they are well-suited for a wide range of applications, including wireless sensor networks and long-range wireless communications in IoT systems[4], [5], [6].

This literature review aims to investigate the recent design and optimization of microstrip patch antennas for Wireless Communication Systems. Specifically, it aims to:

• To identify design considerations and optimization techniques relevant to microstrip patch antennas.
• To evaluate the effectiveness and limitations of various design methodologies and optimization approaches.
1.1 Fundamentals of Microstrip Patch Antenna

1.1.1 Definition and Basic Structure

Microstrip patch antennas represent slender, planar antennas composed of a metallic patch positioned atop a dielectric substrate, complemented by a ground plane on the opposing side. Renowned for their lightweight construction, minimal profile, and efficacy in emitting electromagnetic waves, these antennas serve diverse realms such as wireless communication, radar systems, and IoT technologies. They boast adaptability for multi-band functionality [5], capability for triple-band configurations [1], and potential for optimization to enhance parameters like return loss, gain, and directivity [7]. Integral to contemporary communication networks, including the evolving landscape of 5G and forthcoming 6G frameworks [8], microstrip patch antennas offer a tailored design approach, allowing resonance at specific frequencies to cater to a spectrum of wireless communication requisites [6].

Microstrip Patch Antennas are structured with a conducting material patch affixed onto a dielectric substrate, supported by a ground plane beneath [1], [9]. These antennas are characterized by their lightweight, sleek profile, and effectiveness in radio wave transmission and reception [10]. Diverse designs and setups of Microstrip Patch Antennas have been devised, including U-shaped open slit laminated microstrip antennas, dual-frequency circularly polarized laminated microstrip antennas, and non-radiating edge-fed broadband double-layer microstrip patch antennas [11]. Furthermore, enhancements such as employing I-shaped metamaterial superstrates have been introduced to bolster antenna performance, resulting in expanded multiband capabilities and heightened gain [12]. The design and evaluation of these antennas encompass factors like substrate materials, dimensions, return loss, bandwidth, gain, and directivity considerations.

1.1.2. Operating Principles and Modes

Microstrip patch antennas operate according to principles delineated in academic studies. Renowned for their uncomplicated assembly, cost-effectiveness, and seamless integration with circuits [5], these antennas can be tailored to attain multi-band frequency capabilities through the incorporation of an etched rectangle and circular slots on the patch surface [13]. Moreover, augmenting the bandwidth and gain of microstrip patch antennas can be achieved by introducing slots on the antenna, thereby enhancing key parameters such as bandwidth, gain, and directivity [14]. Additionally, inventive designs integrating magnetic materials within the dielectric substrate have been proposed to diminish the antenna’s resonant frequency and profile, potentially amplifying gain with forthcoming advancements in magnetic materials [15]. In summary, microstrip patch antennas offer adaptable solutions for a myriad of applications spanning communication systems, biomedical devices, and imaging technologies [16].

Microstrip patch antennas showcase a spectrum of operational modes contingent upon their design and setup. Common modes include TM10, TM02, TM12, and higher-order variants such as TM21. These modes are stimulated through adjustments in parameters like the width of the quarter-wave transformer or the integration of asymmetric slots within the patch [5], [7]. Moreover, rectangular microstrip patch antenna arrays, ranging from single elements to configurations like (1×2), (2×2), and (1×4) arrays, can exhibit distinct operating modes like TM10, TM01, and TM11 [7]. Additionally, reconfigurable microstrip patch antennas can employ liquid metal for altering the main beam direction, facilitating multiple beam orientations such as 0°, ±20°, and ±40° [17]. These diverse operational modes offer adaptability and versatility in enhancing the performance of microstrip patch antennas across a breadth of frequency bands and applications.

1.1.3. Advantages and Limitations

Microstrip patch antennas present numerous advantages, rendering them widely favored across diverse applications. Renowned for their straightforward analysis, cost-effectiveness, lightweight construction, and appealing radiation characteristics [5], [18], these antennas boast compactness, low profile, and exceptional conformal capability, rendering them suitable for a broad spectrum of domains including military, aerospace, and medical applications [19]. With the capacity to deliver commendable gain, broad bandwidth, and efficient performance across varied frequency spectrums, microstrip patch antennas adeptly fulfill the requirements of contemporary wireless communication systems [9]. Furthermore, ongoing advancements in microstrip patch antenna design have yielded enhanced performance, positioning them as a promising choice for forthcoming communication systems, potentially extending to applications within 6G technologies [3].

Microstrip patch antennas present notable advantages such as facile fabrication and lightweight construction, yet they also entail certain limitations. These drawbacks encompass narrow bandwidth, low gain, and potential distortion in radiation patterns [20]. The issue of narrow bandwidth holds significance due to its impact on antenna performance, thus underscoring the importance of the Q-factor as a pivotal parameter for design assessment [21]. In response to the bandwidth constraint, innovative approaches like incorporating partial ground planes have been proposed, significantly augmenting bandwidth for specific applications [19]. Furthermore, enhancing both bandwidth and gain is imperative for optimizing the performance of microstrip patch antennas within wireless communication systems, thereby driving the development of broadband designs endowed with superior characteristics [13]. Despite these limitations, microstrip patch antennas continue to hold promise across various applications, including forthcoming 6G communication systems [1].
2. RELATED WORKS

An analysis is conducted on numerous studies that focus on the design and optimization of microstrip patch antennas for wireless communication systems. Below are concise summaries of the study publications, including descriptions of the essential factors.

The paper titled "Design of Microstrip Antennas Array for Wireless Applications by Using HFSS" conveys a comprehensive analysis of the design of a compact 1X2 microstrip patch antenna array. It utilizes the corporate feed technique for excitation and emphasizes the significance of achieving high gain, wide bandwidth, and minimal size antennas in the context of contemporary wireless communication. It examines the antenna's design parameters, substrate material, and frequency range, highlighting its simplicity, compact size, and excellent efficiency for use in the 2.4 GHz frequency band. The research highlights several challenges and limits, such as the limited frequency range of single-element microstrip patch antennas, the need to balance compactness and performance metrics, and the necessity of minimizing losses in the feed network to enhance the efficiency of antenna arrays [3].

Also, in the paper "Design of RF Energy Harvesting Antenna using Optimization Techniques" it provides an overview of the design, analysis, and optimization of an RF energy harvesting antenna for WLAN sources, with a focus on improving antenna performance for RF energy harvesting applications. The focus is placed on certain performance measures and enhancements in efficiency. The results indicate that the antenna gain increased from 6.58 dB to 7 dB after optimization. The directivity of the antenna was measured to be 7.0 dB after optimization. Additionally, the antenna performance for RF energy harvesting was successfully improved using the Genetic Algorithm (GA). The research highlights several obstacles and constraints, such as overcoming the restricted frequency range of conventional microstrip patch antennas, maximizing antenna efficiency for radiofrequency energy harvesting applications, and utilizing evolutionary algorithms to optimize patch designs and gain [22].

"Tri-band microstrip antenna design for wireless communication applications" the introduction of a novel rectangular tri-band patch antenna designed for wireless communication systems, achieved through proper loading elements like slots and shorting pins, in a field where dual-band antennas are more common. The research also examines several models employed in the analysis of microstrip antennas and introduces an innovative antenna design capable of operating in many frequency bands. The findings encompass the successful development of a tri-band patch antenna by including loading components. The findings consist of the successful development of a tri-band patch antenna by including loading components. It primarily focuses on multi-band planar antennas, which are generally designed for dual-band operation. Additionally, a new antenna construction with slots and shorting elements is introduced to achieve multi-band performance. It identifies many challenges and constraints, including the difficulty in getting accurate shorts during the manufacturing process, the complexity of creating a new planar antenna construction that can operate in several frequency bands, and the requirement to guarantee that the experimental and simulation results are consistent [14].

The paper titled "Microstrip Patch Antenna Design for Military Satellite Communication" focuses on the optimization techniques and genetic algorithm employed in the design of the antenna. Findings encompass the development of a broadband and high gain antenna specifically designed for military satellite communication. The antenna's dimensions were optimized using a genetic algorithm, resulting in enhanced performance. Additionally, the antenna's bandwidth was increased to enhance its appropriateness for military satellite communication. It focuses on addressing the limitations of microstrip antennas, specifically the limited bandwidth and poor gain. It tries to overcome these limitations by employing optimization approaches and utilizing a genetic algorithm [23].

"Multiple Performance Optimization for Microstrip Patch Antenna Improvement" provides an overview of the importance of antenna performance in IoT applications, the use of a design of experiments method for antenna optimization, and the specific results achieved through this optimization process. The proposed design of experiments (DOE) method for antenna optimization improves efficiency compared to traditional methods. The antenna optimized using the DOE method showed improved antenna gain and return loss, demonstrating the approach's effectiveness. The study highlights that the DOE method is more efficient in estimating antenna performance compared to using electromagnetic (EM) simulation tools. Some of the problems and restrictions mentioned in the paper are that traditional antenna optimization methods involving EM simulation tools and heuristic algorithms take a lot of time, and there may be differences between simulated and measured results because of parasitic effects. The proposed experimental design method aims to address these challenges by improving antenna design efficiency [24].

"Design of a Double Rectangular Slotted Microstrip Patch Antenna for Wireless Communication" discusses the design and characteristics of a Double Rectangular Slotted Microstrip Patch Antenna for Wireless Communication at 2.4 GHz, emphasizing the importance of low return loss, high gains, and small antennas in advanced wireless communication systems. The antenna is constructed on a FR-4 epoxy substrate with a dielectric constant of 4.4. It is supplied with a typical impedance of 50 ohms, aiming to boost performance by enhancing return loss, gain, and VSWR. The antenna under consideration operates at 2.4 GHz, exhibiting a return loss of -22 dB and a gain of 4.3 dB. The suggested antenna design is extremely efficient, versatile for a range of wireless applications, and straightforward to implement [8].

"Microstrip Patch Antenna for RFID Applications" discusses the significance of RFID technology in different industries, the components of an RFID system, and the design and optimization of a microstrip patch antenna for RFID applications. The study optimized the microstrip patch antenna for RFID applications, achieving a resonant frequency of 965 MHz and a return loss of -35.66 dB by sweeping and iterating the patch antenna size. The paper's challenges and limitations include the narrow bandwidth of patch antennas, which can be both a disadvantage and an advantage depending on the application requirements, as well as the need for careful feeding line optimization to achieve desired performance metrics [25].

The study "Design of a miniaturized multi-band hybrid-mode microstrip patch antenna for wireless communication" explores the importance of wireless networking technologies, the growing demand for compact antennas, the significance of multiband microstrip patch antennas, the research goal of
analyzing antenna performance, and the potential utility of the proposed antenna for 5G applications. It involves assessing the performance of antennas under different circumstances to develop an enhanced design capable of supporting multiple frequency bands and achieving stronger signal amplification. It may be utilized in 5G networks and extended to accommodate larger frequency ranges. The paper discusses the challenges in manufacturing and calculating multiband antennas using specific techniques. It emphasizes the requirement for strong integration capabilities in built-in antennas to meet the demand for small, compact, and affordable antennas. Additionally, it emphasizes the significance of enhancing bandwidth and gain to enable operation in multiple frequency bands. In addition, the study discusses the difficulties associated with parameter modifications that impact the reflection coefficient and the rise in return loss due to changes in thickness [5].

The paper "Microstrip Antenna Design Using CST Optimized by Neural Network Algorithm" describes a complete method for creating microstrip antennas using artificial neural networks, focusing on the rectangular patch configuration. It was trained and tested using a dataset consisting of 1733 data sets. The proposed method has shown strong concordance with CST results. The average error in identifying resonance frequencies was 0.144 GHz for the training set and 0.116 GHz for the test set. The proposed neural network approach for designing microstrip antennas has shown excellent performance when compared to CST findings. The model structure it used was based on trainable radial-based functions (RBFs), and it had low error rates when figuring out resonance frequencies. The study highlights several obstacles and limits, including the complexity of selecting optimal resonance frequency settings, assessing mechanical characteristics, handling high-dimensional data, the constraints of conventional machine learning models, and the requirement for a tailored model for the specific job [18].

The article "Optimal Design of Multiband Microstrip Antennas by Self-Renewing Fitness Estimation of Particle Swarm Optimization Algorithm" highlights the time-consuming nature of microstrip antenna design and showcases the effectiveness of using SFEPSO to accelerate the design process. It also discusses the significance of microstrip antennas in wireless communication and explores the potential of machine-learning techniques to enhance their design. The suggested self-renewing fitness prediction technique, utilizing the PSO algorithm, significantly minimizes the time required for evaluation and enhances the efficiency of design. The optimized results show that we can achieve rapid optimization while maintaining design accuracy. Challenges and limitations include high calculation costs and low design efficiency with traditional optimization methods; difficulties in building prediction models with increasing dimensions; the disadvantages of the Gaussian process compared to ANN and SVM; and the advantages of the fitness inheritance method in saving time and avoiding errors [26].

Table 1 – Review of Included Studies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title and Author, year</th>
<th>Design Considerations</th>
<th>Optimization Techniques</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Microstrip Antenna Design Using CST Optimized By Neural Network Algorithm (M.A.Mohamed, 2023)</td>
<td>Novel design (resonant frequency)</td>
<td>Varying network parameters and CST</td>
<td>Artificial neural networks</td>
<td>A new way of designing microstrip antennas that uses artificial neural networks gets resonance frequency detection with mean errors of 0.144 GHz (train) and 0.116 GHz (test). This is done by changing the parameters of the network to get the best results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Performance Optimization for Microstrip Patch Antenna Improvement (Ja-Hao Chen, 2023)</td>
<td>Antenna gain &amp; Reflection Loss</td>
<td>Design of Experiments (DOE), Response Surface Methodology (RSM), Central Composite Design (CCD)</td>
<td>IOT applications</td>
<td>The paper proposes a Design of Experiments (DOE) method for optimizing microstrip patch antennas, enhancing efficiency in wireless communication systems by improving antenna gain and return loss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design of Microstrip Antennas Array for Wireless Application by Using HFSS (J. Swathi, 2023)</td>
<td>Dielectric Material Selection, Corporate Feed Technique, Resonant Frequency, Array Configuration, Optimal Dimensions</td>
<td>HFSS</td>
<td>Wireless Communication, X-Band Radar Systems, Compact Antenna Solutions, Bandwidth Enhancement</td>
<td>For wireless applications at 2.4 GHz, the paper presents the design of a compact 1X2 microstrip patch antenna array using the corporate feed technique on an FR-4 substrate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and Optimization of Miniaturized Microstrip Patch Antennas Using a Genetic Algorithm</td>
<td>Enhance performance, Decrease resonance frequency, and minimize antenna size</td>
<td>Genetic Algorithm</td>
<td>Wireless Communication System</td>
<td>For wireless communication systems, the research paper suggests using a genetic algorithm to improve performance, lower resonance frequency, and reduce antenna</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 1 – Review of Included Studies.
The analysis of design considerations and optimization techniques across the mentioned papers reveals a diverse array of approaches aimed at enhancing the performance of microstrip patch antennas for various applications. Several papers focus on optimizing the resonant frequency of microstrip antennas. Techniques such as using artificial neural networks [18] and genetic algorithms[16] are employed to achieve this goal. Optimization of resonant frequency is crucial as it directly impacts the antenna's efficiency and effectiveness in wireless communication systems.

Some papers discuss the design of antenna arrays, which offer improved performance compared to single antennas. Factors like corporate feed technique and optimal dimensions play a significant role in determining the performance of antenna arrays, especially in applications like radar systems and wireless communication. Bandwidth enhancement is another critical aspect considered in antenna design. Techniques such as using double rectangular slotted...
designs [8] and optimizing multiband antennas [26] are employed to enhance bandwidth, ensuring compatibility with diverse communication standards and frequencies.

Different papers target specific applications such as military satellite communication [23], RFID systems [25], and WLAN [22]. Tailoring antenna designs to specific applications ensures optimal performance and functionality in real-world scenarios. When it comes to optimization techniques, genetic algorithms are prominently featured in several papers [23] for optimizing antenna performance. These algorithms are well-suited for optimization problems with multiple objectives and constraints, making them ideal for antenna design tasks where various parameters need to be optimized simultaneously.

Additionally, the utilization of artificial neural networks for antenna design [18] demonstrates the potential of machine learning techniques in optimizing complex systems. ANNs offer a data-driven approach to optimization, capable of learning patterns and relationships within large datasets to achieve highly accurate results. Simulation software, particularly HFSS (High-Frequency Structural Simulator), emerges as a widely used tool for antenna design and optimization [3], [8], [25]. Simulation software allows engineers to analyze antenna performance, evaluate design iterations, and optimize parameters without the need for costly and time-consuming physical prototyping. Lastly, the self-renewing fitness estimation of PSO algorithm proposed in Fan et al. (2019) demonstrates another optimization technique for efficient design of multiband microstrip antennas. PSO algorithms are known for their simplicity and effectiveness in solving optimization problems, making them suitable for antenna design tasks.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The literature review on the design and optimization of microstrip patch antennas underscores the breadth of research and innovation in this field. Across various studies, researchers have delved into a multitude of design considerations and optimization techniques aimed at enhancing the performance and functionality of microstrip patch antennas for diverse applications. From resonant frequency optimization to application-specific solutions tailored to areas such as military communication and RFID systems, the findings highlight the versatility and adaptability of microstrip patch antennas in meeting the evolving needs of modern communication systems.

One of the key takeaways from this review is the significant role played by optimization techniques in achieving superior antenna performance. Genetic algorithms, artificial neural networks, particle swarm optimization, and simulation software have emerged as powerful tools for efficiently optimizing antenna parameters and achieving desired performance metrics such as gain, bandwidth, and return loss. Moreover, the integration of advanced technologies such as machine learning has opened up new avenues for enhancing antenna design and optimization, pushing the boundaries of what is achievable in terms of efficiency and functionality.

Furthermore, the emphasis on application-specific solutions underscores the importance of tailoring antenna designs to meet the unique requirements of different communication systems. Whether it's enhancing the robustness of antennas for military applications or optimizing energy efficiency for IoT devices, researchers have demonstrated a keen understanding of the specific challenges and constraints posed by various application scenarios.

Looking ahead, future research directions in the field of microstrip patch antenna design and optimization are abundant. From exploring multi-objective optimization techniques to investigating dynamic reconfiguration and miniaturization for wearable applications, there are numerous opportunities for further innovation and advancement. Additionally, a continued focus on enhancing the reliability, energy efficiency, and integration of microstrip patch antennas into larger communication systems will be crucial for addressing the evolving needs of modern wireless networks.

In conclusion, the literature review provides valuable insights into the state-of-the-art in microstrip patch antenna design and optimization, showcasing the remarkable progress made thus far and laying the groundwork for future research endeavors in this dynamic and rapidly evolving field.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of the literature review, several recommendations can be made to guide future research efforts in the design and optimization of microstrip patch antennas:

1. **Exploration of Multi-Objective Optimization.** Researchers should explore advanced optimization techniques capable of handling multiple conflicting objectives simultaneously. This includes maximizing gain while minimizing size, power consumption, or interference levels, thereby enabling the design of more efficient and versatile antennas.

2. **Investigation of Robustness and Reliability.** There is a need to focus on enhancing the robustness and reliability of microstrip patch antennas, especially in harsh environmental conditions or dynamic operational scenarios. This may involve exploring novel materials, structural designs, or protective coatings to mitigate the effects of temperature variations, moisture, and mechanical stresses.

3. **Research on Dynamic Reconfiguration.** Future studies should investigate methods for designing dynamically reconfigurable antennas capable of adapting their properties in real time to changing operating conditions or user requirements. This could enable the development of adaptive communication systems with enhanced flexibility and resilience.
4. Integration with Advanced Technologies. Researchers should explore the integration of microstrip patch antennas with other advanced technologies such as RF front-ends, signal processing modules, or adaptive beamforming techniques. This integration can lead to the development of more integrated and efficient communication systems with improved performance and functionality.

5. Focus on Miniaturization and Wearable Applications. There is a growing demand for compact and lightweight antennas suitable for wearable devices, IoT applications, and other emerging technologies. Future research efforts should focus on further miniaturization techniques to meet the size and weight constraints imposed by these applications while maintaining optimal performance.

6. Emphasis on Energy Efficiency. Given the increasing proliferation of battery-powered and energy-harvesting systems, there is a need to optimize antenna designs for energy efficiency. Future studies should explore techniques for minimizing power consumption and maximizing energy harvesting capabilities to prolong device lifetimes and enhance sustainability.

By addressing these recommendations, researchers can advance the field of microstrip patch antenna design and optimization, paving the way for the development of more efficient, reliable, and versatile communication systems to meet the evolving needs of modern wireless networks.

References


