

Color Image Segmentation using Fuzzy Local Texture Patterns

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ABSTRACT

Texture is one of the fundamental image characteristics useful in computer vision tasks such as object recognition and scene analysis. Texture segmentation is one of the image analysis tasks. The prospect of texture segmentation depends on the choice of the texture description method and the segmentation procedure. In this paper, color-texture descriptors are proposed to represent the texture contents of the color images. In these texture description schemes, small areas of the image are represented by fuzzy based local texture patterns and the entire image is represented by frequency occurrence of such texture patterns. Supervised segmentation of color images is performed using these color-texture descriptors and promising results are obtained.

General Terms

Computer Vision, Texture Analysis.

Keywords

Texture Patterns, Fuzzy Local Texture Patterns, Fuzzy Pattern Spectrum, Texture Segmentation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Almost every surface can be regarded with the help of texture, which is a recognizable and indispensable property of the surface. Texture based image analysis plays a vital role in satellite image processing, medical image processing, and many more areas of computer vision. Texture segmentation is one of the texture analysis tasks, which attempts to partition an image into different homogeneous texture regions. The texture description method plays the most important role for efficient image segmentation. Many texture feature extraction methods suitable for segmentation have been proposed by the researchers for gray-level [1 - 5] and color images [6 - 8].

Segmentation is found to be the most complex task in many image processing applications. Segmentation techniques can be classified into either supervised or unsupervised. In the case of supervised texture segmentation, prior knowledge of textures present in the image is required. For unsupervised method of texture segmentation, details of textures present in an image need not be known in advance.

A region based unsupervised texture segmentation method is proposed by Ojala and Pietikainen [2] in which, coarse segmentation and pixel-wise classification scheme are combined and the distributions of Local Binary Patterns (LBP) and the pattern contrast are used as texture descriptor to measure the similarity of adjacent image regions in an image. Muneeswaran et al [1] proposed a feature extraction technique by combining the discriminating texture features of spatial and spectral distribution of image attributes. In this method,

the texture features are extracted by applying Gaussian and Gabor wavelets on the image and they are combined with the local intensity variations to get a combined feature distribution. Then in the segmentation step, the pixels with homogeneous attributes are clustered by fuzzy C-means clustering method and are labeled. A moment based texture segmentation method is proposed by Tuceryan [4] in which, the lower order moments are computed from the image, then the texture features are computed from the moments, and they are used as the texture descriptors for segmentation. Suruliandi and Ramar [9] proposed a one-dimensional histogram based texture description scheme, in which the local texture patterns are used to describe the local texture and the global texture is described by the occurrence frequency of such local descriptors over the entire image. In our earlier paper [10], a fuzzy based method of texture description scheme is proposed and tested for texture classification and texture segmentation of gray-scale images.

Maenpaa and Pietikainen [11] explored different approaches for color-texture analysis. In this paper, color histograms and color ratio histograms which consider only color features are taken into account for texture analysis. In another way, texture features are taken into account. For this, the Gabor filter and LBP operator are used for texture feature extraction. The combination of color and texture descriptions is also analyzed using channel-wise and opponent color-texture description methods. It is concluded in the paper that the performance of the gray-scale texture description method is better than other methods in case of illumination variations. Three different approaches for color texture classification have been proposed by Arvis et al [12], which are based on the co-occurrence matrix method. The first approach is a multispectral extension, in which the co-occurrence matrices are computed within and between color channels. In the second approach, joint color-texture features are computed. The third approach uses the gray-scale texture features computed on the quantized color image. Among the three proposed approaches, the performance of multispectral method is found to be better.

So, it is clear that a histogram based texture features can be used as texture descriptor for texture segmentation. Moreover, gray-scale texture feature extraction techniques can be directly extended to color textures either by considering the inter-channel or intra-channel relationships. As referred in [13], the color-texture analysis approaches may be classified into the methods that process texture and color individually, and the methods that process texture and color in a combined way. In color-texture analysis approach that concerns only color features, the spatial interaction within or between the color channels may be considered.

With reference to Palm [14], the gray-scale texture feature extraction methods can straightforwardly be used for color-texture feature extraction by combining the results from the individual color channels. This simple technique often gives very good results. Since this method does not include inter-channel interactions, it will be robust against illumination color variations.

In this paper, two color-texture description methods are proposed for the segmentation of color images. For local and global texture representation in both methods, Fuzzy Local Texture Patterns (FLTP) model [10] is used. In the first proposed method, to achieve color-texture representation in a simple way, the color image is transformed into a gray-scale image and the texture contents in it are described by the Fuzzy Patterns Spectrum – Gray-Scale (FPS_{GS}). In the next method, to get more effective results, texture features are derived from three individual RGB color channels and are combined to get Fuzzy Patterns Spectrum – Color Channels (FPS_{CC}) to describe the global texture. For the supervised color-texture segmentation, training samples are extracted from different texture regions present in the image and are labeled. During the segmentation stage, each pixel which acts as a test sample is classified and labeled.

The remaining part of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 describes the texture description methods. In Section 3, the supervised segmentation procedure is explained. Texture segmentation experiments and results are presented in Section 4. Section 5 concludes the paper.

2. TEXTURE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Fuzzy Local Texture Patterns (FLTP)

FLTP method of texture description [13] is used for the local texture pattern formation. In a 3x3 local image region, let g_c be the value of the central pixel and g_i ($i=1,2,\dots,8$) be the values of its neighbor pixels. Let the difference between g_c and g_i be x_i ($i=1, 2, \dots, 8$). Let the Pattern Unit P , between g_c and its neighbors g_i ($i=1,2, \dots, 8$) be defined as

$$P(g_i, g_c) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } g_i \text{ less than } g_c \\ 1 & \text{if } g_i \text{ equal to } g_c \\ 9 & \text{if } g_i \text{ greater than } g_c \end{cases} \quad i=1,2,\dots,8. \quad (1)$$

P is assigned with one of the three distinct values 0, 1, and 9 based on the three fuzzy conditions ‘less than’, ‘equal to’, and ‘greater than’. Let $\mu_0(x_i)$, $\mu_1(x_i)$ and $\mu_9(x_i)$ be the membership degrees of x_i to the P values 0,1 and 9 respectively.

The fuzzy pattern unit, FP between g_c and its neighbors g_i ($i=1,2, \dots, 8$) is defined as

$$FP(g_c, g_i) = (\mu_0(x_i)/0, \mu_1(x_i)/1, \mu_9(x_i)/9) \quad (2)$$

for ($i=1,2,\dots,8$)

If the local region is homogeneous, then the difference between g_c and g_i will be equal to zero or almost equal to zero. For this case, $\mu_1(x_i)$ will be higher, $\mu_0(x_i)$ and $\mu_9(x_i)$ will be lower. In case of non-homogeneous region, the difference between g_c and g_i will be more and therefore $\mu_1(x_i)$ will be decreasing, $\mu_0(x_i)$ or $\mu_9(x_i)$ will be increasing.

The local region can be represented as a Fuzzy Pattern Units Matrix (FPUM), in which the entries are FP values. From the FPUM cell values, the $FLTP$ is calculated. Each cell of the matrix contains three membership values associated with the P values (0, 1 or 9). By using these values, a set of Pattern

Strings (S) is constructed. Each S consists of eight elements and is defined by

$$S = \{ps_i\} = P_i^v \quad (3)$$

where, ps_i ($i=1,2,\dots,8$) is the element of S . P_i^v means P value of i^{th} element having non-zero membership value v . If the matrix contains only one non-zero membership value in each cell, there will be only one S . If there are n elements in the matrix having two non-zero membership values, then the total number of S is 2^n . S is formed from P values of all possible combinations of non-zero membership values. We use a new $mLTP$ operator is defined by

$$mLTP = \sum_{i=1}^8 ps_i \quad (4)$$

When the membership degree values are equal to one in all the matrix elements, there will be only one S and one $mLTP$. If there are n elements in the matrix having two non-zero membership values, the total number of S and $mLTP$ is 2^n .

Further, the membership degree to each $mLTP$ is obtained by multiplying the eight membership degrees of corresponding S .

$$\mu(mLTP) = \prod_{i=1}^8 \mu_{ps_i}(x_i) \quad (5)$$

So, when the 3x3 local region is considered, the central pixel has associated $FLTP$ which is defined by

$$FLTP = \sum_{k=1}^K mLTP_k * \mu(mLTP_k) \quad (6)$$

where K is the total number of S .

2.2 Fuzzy Pattern Spectrum (FPS)

In the FLTP method, the global texture of the entire image is described by the frequency occurrence of the Fuzzy Local Texture Patterns present in the image and is termed as Fuzzy Pattern Spectrum (FPS). In this paper, color-texture characterization is done by two different methods. In the first method, the color image in RGB color space is transformed into its corresponding gray-scale image. The texture of given image is represented locally by the texture descriptor FLTP and the FLTP values are collected in a one-dimensional histogram FPS_{GS}. In the second method, FLTP are computed for three color channels individually. The frequency occurrence of FLTP corresponding to the three channels are formed and concatenated to get the global texture descriptor FPS_{CC}.

3. TEXTURE SEGMENTATION

3.1 Texture Similarity

To compare textures, either similarity or dissimilarity distance measure is used. A texture similarity measure is used to compare the textures in segmentation experiments. Similarity between different textures is evaluated by comparing their frequency distributions. The spectrums are compared as a test of goodness-of-fit using a nonparametric statistic, known as the G-statistic [15]. The G-statistic which compares the bins of two histograms is defined as

$$G(s, m) = 2 \left(\begin{array}{l} \left[\sum_{s,m} \sum_{i=1}^n f_i \log f_i \right] - \\ \left[\sum_{s,m} \left(\sum_{i=1}^n f_i \right) \log \left(\sum_{i=1}^n f_i \right) \right] - \\ \left[\sum_{i=1}^n \left(\sum_{s,m} f_i \right) \log \left(\sum_{s,m} f_i \right) \right] + \\ \left[\left(\sum_{s,m} \sum_{i=1}^n f_i \right) \log \left(\sum_{s,m} \sum_{i=1}^n f_i \right) \right] \end{array} \right) \quad (7)$$

where s is a histogram of the first image and m is a histogram of second image, n is the total number of bins in the histogram and f_i is the frequency at bin i .

3.2 Supervised Texture Segmentation

In the supervised segmentation method, knowledge of textures present in the image is known in advance. So, the training samples of texture regions are extracted and the global texture descriptions are computed for these sampled regions and labels are assigned to them. During the segmentation stage, each pixel is classified and labeled based on the supervised segmentation algorithm. The algorithms for two texture representations are given below.

3.2.1 Segmentation Algorithm for FPS_{GS}

- Transform the given color image into gray-level image.
- Randomly select sample sub-images from each texture region in the transformed image. Let n_t be the total number of sub-images.
- Calculate FLTP for each sample sub-image using a moving sliding window of size 3x3. Compute FPS_{GS} for all the sub-images
- Scan the transformed image by a sliding window W with a step of one pixel in the row and one pixel in the column directions, calculate the FLTP and compute the FPS_{GS} for each window under consideration.
- Compute the texture similarity $G(i)$, for $i = 1, 2, \dots, n_t$ between FPS_{GS} of each window with the FPS_{GS} of all model samples.
- Assign the central pixel of the window considered to class I such that $G(I)$ is minimum among all the $G(i)$, for $i = 1, 2, \dots, n_t$.

3.2.2 Segmentation Algorithm for FPS_{CC}

- Randomly select sample sub-images from each distinct texture region in the color image. Let n_t be the total number of sub-images.
- Calculate FLTP for each sample sub-image using a moving sliding window of size 3x3 in three color channels. Compute FPS_{CC} for all the sub-images.
- Scan the color image by a sliding window W , calculate the FLTP for three color channels and compute the FPS_{CC} for each window under consideration.
- Compute the texture similarity $G(i)$, for $i = 1, 2, \dots, n_t$ between FPS_{CC} of each window with the FPS_{CC} of all model samples.
- To assign label to each pixel, follow the last step of Section 3.2.1.

4. EXPERIMENTS AND RESULTS

4.1 Images used in the Experiments

Four mosaic color images are used in the segmentation experiments. They are shown in the first column of Figure 1.

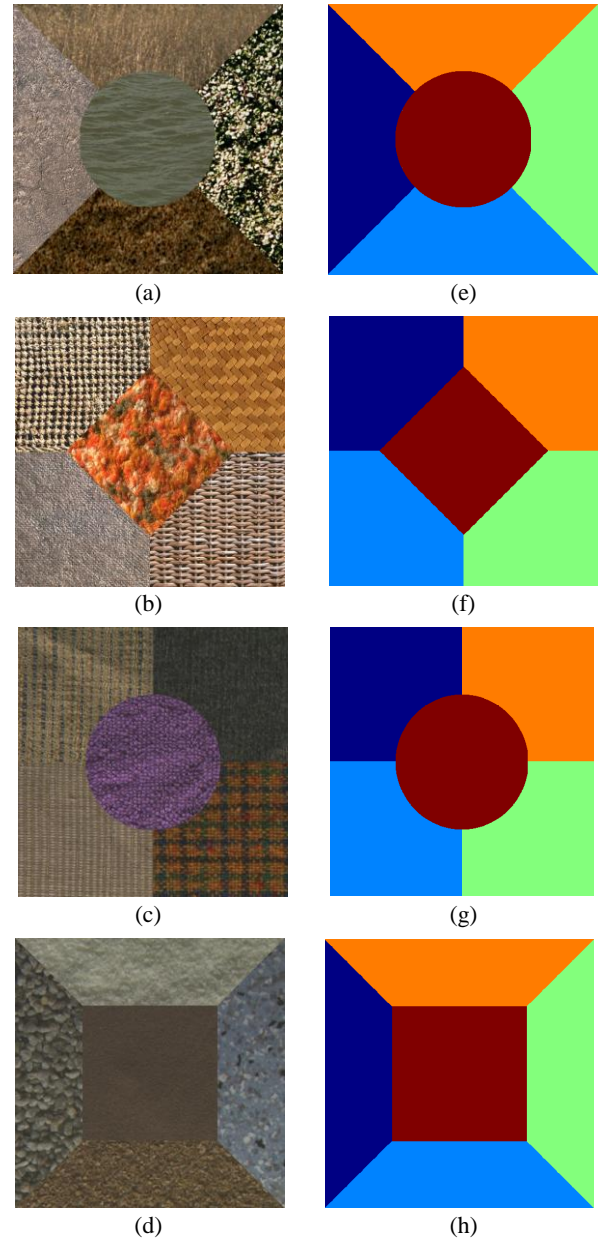


Figure 1: Input mosaic images and ground truth images

(a), (b), (c), and (d) Input images,
(e), (f), (g), and (h) Ground truth images

Image shown in Figure 1(a) of size 512x512 pixels is composed with five textured images from VisTex texture database [16]. The texture images used are Grassland (Top), Stone (Left), Sand (Bottom), Leaves (Right), and Water (Center). The texture regions in this input image represent real world objects. The ground truth image is shown in Figure 1(e). The image in Figure 1(b) of size 512x512 pixels is also constructed with the texture images from VisTex database. The images used in this figure are Fabric000 (Top Right), Fabric007 (Bottom Left), Fabric008 (Top Left), Fabric013 (Bottom Right), and Fabric015 (Center). These images

correspond to man-made objects. The ground truth image is shown in Figure 1(f). The mosaic image shown in Figure 1(c) of size 512x512 pixels is composed with five texture images from OUTex texture database [17]. The texture images used are Canvas001 (Top Left), Canvas002 (Center), Canvas003 (Top Right), Canvas004 (Bottom Left), and Canvas005 (Bottom Right). All the texture regions correspond to man-made objects. The ground truth image is shown in Figure 1(g). The mosaic image in Figure 1(d) is created using the images of OUTex database. The images used in this figure are Goats007 (Top), Quartz006 (Left), Flakes009 (Bottom), Carpet005 (Right), and Crushedstone003 (Center). The ground truth image is shown in Figure 1(h).

4.2 Experiment #1 : Segmentation of color images using FPS_{GS}

The color mosaic images shown in Figure 1 are transformed to gray-scale images and are used as input images in this experiment. All the images are constructed using five different texture regions. The procedure in Section 3.2.1 is used for segmentation. A set of training samples are extracted from the input image. The training set for the classifier consisted of randomly selected sub-image of size 64x64 per texture region. So, there are 5 training samples in total. FPS_{GS} are computed for all the five samples. For every pixel surrounded by a window of size W , FPS_{GS} are computed. The size of window size should be optimum, to bring out the texture properties to discriminate the different texture regions. If the window size is too small, there may be unwanted noisy regions in the segmented output. A larger window size creates boundary problem. Here, a window size of 31x31 is selected. Newly calculated FPS_{GS} of each pixel surrounded by the window is compared with the FPS_{GS} of all training samples using the G-statistics distance measure. The label of training sample with the smallest distance is assigned to the testing sample. All the pixels in the entire input image are classified and labeled. The resulting image is the segmented image. The segmented images are post processed by running a sliding window of size 33x33, and the centre pixel is assigned with the label of majority pixels within the window. The experimental results are given in Figure 2 for the corresponding input texture mosaic images in Figure 1. In the figure, the first column shows the segmented images and second column contains the post-processed images.

The proposed FPS_{GS} method gives five segments corresponding to the texture regions present in the input images. it is evident from Figure 2(a), FPS_{GS} method suffers in two regions (Sand and Leaves) slightly, because the pattern distributions in these regions are similar in fashion. It is observed from the Figure 2(c) and 2(d), the FPS_{GS} method fails to segment one or two regions correctly. However, in the post-processed images, the noisy patches are suppressed and the results seem to be better.

To evaluate the performance of the proposed method, confusion matrix is used. The confusion matrices for the output images in Figure 2(e)-(h) are given in Tables 1-4 respectively. Diagonal cell entries in the matrix reveal the fact that the number of pixels correctly segmented as mentioned in the ground truth image. This can be referred as True Positives. Other cell entries give the number of pixels incorrectly segmented and this is noted as False Negatives. For example, the first row of Table 1 gives the following information. With reference to ground truth image, 43802 Stone texture image pixels are correctly segmented as Stone texture pixels; 74 Stone pixels are misclassified into Sand pixels; 2 Stone pixels

are misclassified into Leaves pixels; 772 Stone pixels are misclassified into Grassland pixels.

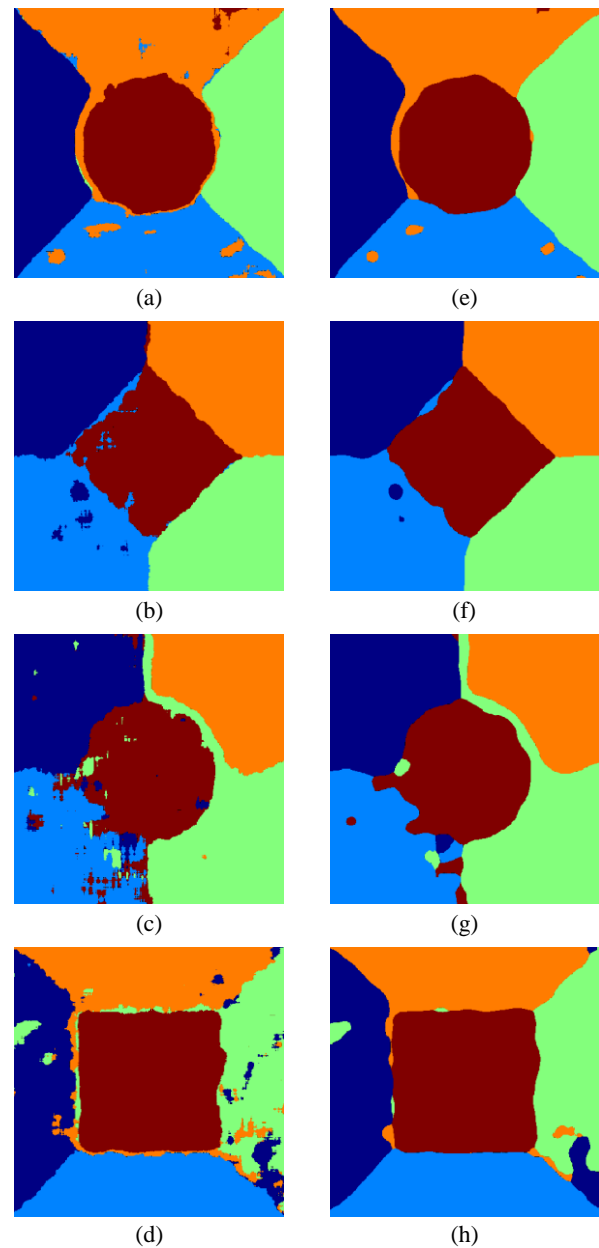


Figure 2: Supervised Segmentation using FPS_{GS}

(a), (b), (c), and (d) Segmented images,
 (e), (f), (g), and (h) Post-processed images

Sensitivity is one the statistical measures used for the performance evaluation of segmentation algorithms. It measures the proportion of correctly segmented portions to the ground truth. It is defined as

$$Sensitivity = \frac{\text{Number of True Positives}}{\text{Number of True Positives} + \text{Number of False Negatives}} \quad (8)$$

The number of correctly segmented pixels (True Positives) is found out by summing up all the diagonal entries of the matrix. The size of the input images is 512x512 pixels. The size of the sliding window is selected as 31x31 pixels. The size of the segmented image is (512-31+1)x(512-31+1) which is 482x482 pixels.

Therefore, the sensitivity for the image shown in Figure 2(e) is calculated from the confusion matrix in Table 1.

$$\text{Sensitivity} = \frac{43802 + 44289 + 44838 + 43478 + 46433}{482 * 482} = 0.9592$$

Table 1. Confusion matrix for the image in Figure 2(e)

Texture	The number of pixels classified out of 232324 pixels				
	Stone	Sand	Leaves	Grass land	Water
Stone	43802	74	2	772	0
Sand	228	44289	210	473	50
Leaves	0	216	44838	192	0
Grass land	342	0	204	43478	1221
Water	0	249	1114	4137	46433
Sensitivity 0.9592					

Table 2. Confusion matrix for the image in Figure 2(f)

Texture	The number of pixels classified out of 232324 pixels				
	Fabric 008	Fabric 007	Fabric 013	Fabric 000	Fabric 015
Fabric 008	44848	171	0	241	101
Fabric 007	750	44602	10	0	0
Fabric 013	0	71	45102	38	151
Fabric 000	0	0	0	45233	128
Fabric 015	196	3239	55	54	47334
Sensitivity 0.9776					

Table 3. Confusion matrix for the image in Figure 2(g)

Texture	The number of pixels classified out of 232324 pixels				
	Canvas 001	Canvas 004	Canvas 005	Canvas 003	Canvas 002
Canvas 001	43966	0	1059	0	89
Canvas 004	1373	39208	986	0	3556
Canvas 005	0	0	44698	310	107
Canvas 003	0	0	1814	43300	0
Canvas 002	1613	680	4286	0	45279
Sensitivity 0.9317					

Table 4. Confusion matrix for the image in Figure 2(h)

Texture	The number of pixels classified out of 232324 pixels				
	Quartz	Flakes	Carpet	Groats	Crushed stone
Quartz	37989	530	1207	1457	175
Flakes	0	41729	0	81	0
Carpet	3950	883	34846	1678	453
Groats	1234	0	235	40162	179
Crushed stone	0	509	430	408	64189
Sensitivity 0.9423					

From the Tables, It is observed that the sensitivity is higher for the image in Figure 2(f) and it is interesting to note that better segmentation is visually recognized for the same image.

4.3 Experiment #2: Segmentation of color images using FPS_{CC}

Segmentation experiment is carried out as per the procedure explained in Section 3.3.2. Five randomly selected texture sub-images of size 64x64 per texture region are extracted from the input images shown in Figure 1. FPS_{CC} are computed for all the three color channels for five samples of each texture. For every pixel surrounded by a window of size W , FPS_{CC} are computed for each color channel separately. The sliding window size is set to 32x32. The FPS_{CC} of each pixel is compared with the every training sample. The label of training sample with the smallest distance is assigned to the testing sample. All the pixels in the entire input image are classified and labeled. The results are shown in Figure 3. In the figure, the first column shows the segmented images and second column contains the post-processed images.

This method is able to achieve better results than the FPS_{GS} method. The segmented images shown in Figure 3(f) and 3(h) contain very few holes. The output images are perceptually very close to the ground truth images shown in second column of Figure 1.

Table 5. Confusion matrix for the image in Figure 3(e)

Texture	The number of pixels classified out of 232324 pixels				
	Stone	Sand	Leaves	Grass land	Water
Stone	44015	75	2	558	0
Sand	345	44763	139	3	0
Leaves	0	698	44391	157	0
Grass land	253	132	148	44712	0
Water	11	594	821	4145	46362
Sensitivity 0.9652					

Table 6. Confusion matrix for the image in Figure 3(f)

Texture	The number of pixels classified out of 232324 pixels				
	Fabric 008	Fabric 007	Fabric 013	Fabric 000	Fabric 015
Fabric 008	45154	9	0	118	80
Fabric 007	1280	44029	53	0	0
Fabric 013	0	24	45195	0	143
Fabric 000	0	0	72	45048	241
Fabric 015	415	2293	64	16	48090
Sensitivity 0.9793					

Table 7. Confusion matrix for the image in Figure 3(g)

Texture	The number of pixels classified out of 232324 pixels				
	Canvas 001	Canvas 004	Canvas 005	Canvas 003	Canvas 002
Canvas 001	45039	0	0	0	75
Canvas 004	606	44421	31	0	65
Canvas 005	87	13	44754	95	166
Canvas 003	110	0	200	44641	163
Canvas 002	508	232	51	166	50901
Sensitivity 0.9889					

Table 8. Confusion matrix for the image in Figure 3(h)

Texture	The number of pixels classified out of 232324 pixels				
	Quartz	Flakes	Carpet	Groats	Crushed stone
Quartz	38595	448	2037	27	251
Flakes	0	41781	5	4	20
Carpet	1139	958	38656	748	309
Groats	780	0	317	40546	167
Crushed stone	5	473	723	62	64273
Sensitivity 0.9635					

The confusion matrices for the segmented images in Figure 3(e)-(h) are given in Tables 5-8 respectively. From the tables, it is observed that the sensitivity is more than 0.96 for all the images used in the experiments. The higher sensitivity evidences higher segmentation accuracy.

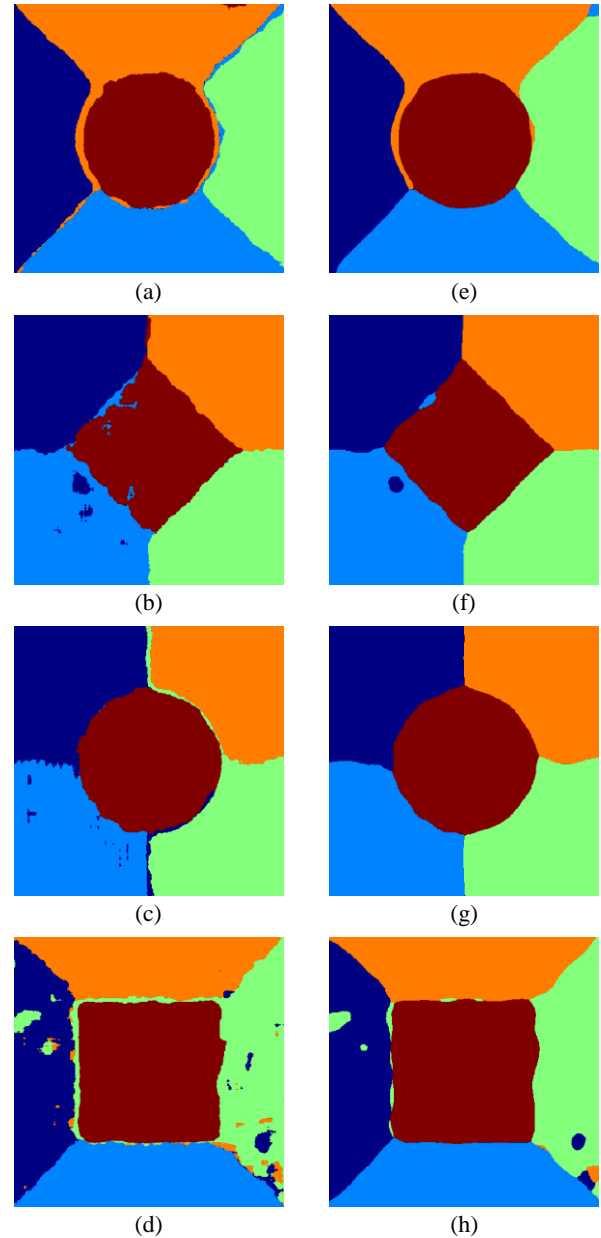


Fig 3: Supervised Segmentation using FPS_{CC}

(a), (b), (c), and (d) Segmented images,
(e), (f), (g), and (h) Post-processed images

Two benchmark textured images are used in the segmentation experiments. The images of OUTex database are captured under controlled illumination conditions, whereas VisTex images are taken in uncontrolled illumination conditions.

In the first proposed method, the gray-scale texture descriptor is applied on the intensity image which is transformed from the color image. In this method, the color information is not used directly. But, in the second proposed method, texture information in three color channels is represented individually and combined later. So, color and texture features are directly involved in representing images.

A comparative analysis is performed using the sensitivity values from the Tables (1)-(8) and is illustrated in Figure 4. From Figure 4, it is noted that the FPS_{CC} method outperforms the FPS_{GS} method in segmenting the color images. The

performances of both methods are almost same for the images of VisTex database. But, the performance of FPS_{CC} method is superior to FPS_{GS} method for the OUTex images.

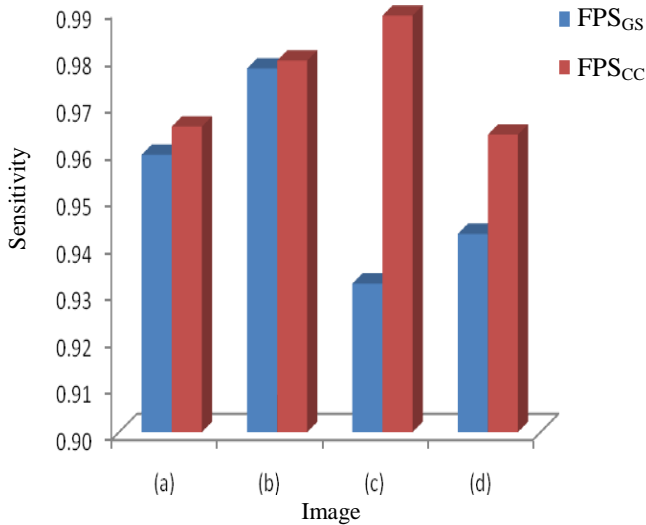


Fig 4: Comparative Analysis of FPS_{GS} and FPS_{CC} models

5. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, color-texture descriptors are proposed to represent the texture contents of color images. FLTP and FPS are used to describe the local and global texture respectively. The performances of the descriptors have been studied for supervised texture segmentation tasks. One of the approaches for color-texture description is by converting the color image into gray-level image and straightforwardly representing it by the gray-scale texture descriptor. Another approach is describing the texture information of the different color channels individually and combining them later.

From the experimental results of Section 4.2, it is inferred that texture of a color image can be represented by texture descriptor FPS_{GS} that are intended for gray-scale texture. From the results of experiment in Section 4.3, it noted that the second approach of texture descriptor, FPS_{CC}, is performing extremely well for supervised segmentation due to its higher discriminatory power. This much of good performance is achieved at the cost of computing power. From the results, it is noted that the proposed methods give five segments corresponding to the texture regions present in the input images. Therefore, the proposed methods can be used for texture segmentation applications.

In this work, only one-dimensional FPS methods have been focused. Further improvement point of view, segmentation performance may be enhanced by applying co-occurrence features extraction techniques on FLTP and by combining other complementary features like contrast and color. Other popular unsupervised texture segmentation algorithms may be attempted.

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