Compact Two-Port MIMO Antenna with High Isolation Using Parasitic Reflectors for UWB, X and Ku Band Applications

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Abstract—In this communication, a compact two-port multiple input multiple output (MIMO) antenna with high isolation is presented for multiband applications. The size of the proposed structure is $0.15\lambda_0 \times 0.27\lambda_0$ ($\lambda_0$, measured at lower frequency, is 2.95 GHz), and the antenna elements are separated by a distance of $0.04\lambda_0$. The truncated partial ground offers good impedance performance with a fractional bandwidth of 136.5% from 2.95 to 15.65 GHz and covers the uninterrupted ultra-wideband (UWB), X and Ku band applications. High isolation of more than 25 dB is attained by placing parasitic elements between the antennas in a precise manner. The proposed structure is simulated, fabricated, tested, and verified practically. The radiation efficiency is more than 90% of the entire band. The peak gain values vary from 1.2 to 6.8 dB in the desired band, and its maximum value is 6.8 dB at 11.6 GHz. Diversity performance is also studied. The proposed structure offers an envelope correlation coefficient (ECC) of less than 0.04, diversity gain (DG) of greater than 9.996 dB, total active reflection coefficient (TARC) of below $-10\,\text{dB}$, mean effective gain (MEG) of around $-3\,\text{dB}$, and channel capacity losses (CCL) values are below 0.2 bits/sec/Hz. The measured and simulation results are in good concord.

1. INTRODUCTION

Multiple input multiple output (MIMO) technology plays a key role in present wireless communications due to its features like higher data rate, more channel capacity than single element system, high signal to noise ratio (SNR), good quality of transmission, excellent diversity performance and more reliability without the need for additional transmitter power and bandwidth. In MIMO technology, multiple antennas are placed side by side at the transmitting and receiving ends. Due to the small space between antenna elements in portable devices, mutual coupling is introduced, which degrades the system performance. Hence, coupling is a primary limiting factor in MIMO technology [1]. In 2002, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) assigned an unlicensed band from 3.1 to 10.6 GHz named ultra-wideband (UWB). However, UWB system suffers from signal (multipath) fading in a multipath environment. The MIMO technology effectively mitigates the fading problem using diversity techniques like spatial multiplexing and space-time coding. The combination of UWB with MIMO technology has more applications in wireless technology due to its wide bandwidth and high diversity performance, but it is still agonized with the coupling problem.

The review of several techniques for isolation enhancement (or mutual coupling reduction) between antenna elements in MIMO systems is discussed in [2]. In addition, various decoupling structures were presented in [3–27] such as novel printed circuit structures [3], wideband planar structure [4], defected ground structure loaded with meandered lines [5], miniature double-layer EBG structure [6], the orthogonal arrangement of a modified rectangular shaped radiators [7], fence type decoupling structure [8], and metamaterial-based structure [9]. Also, the isolation is improved...
between radiating elements using F-shaped stubs placed between elements [10], resistive loading [11], a quasi self-complementary arrangement of antenna elements [12], two meandering monopoles using inverted L-shaped stubs [13], wideband neutralization line [14], and a modified T-shaped stub [15]. Other decoupling structures have been discussed which include protruded parasitic stubs between MIMO antenna elements [16–18], double grounded CRR structure between semi-hexagonal-shaped ring antennas [19], a T-shaped slot in the ground plane [20], a simple ground stub between linearly polarized monopoles [21], a rectangular-shaped ground plane with an extruded T-shaped stub [22], inserting two inverted L-shaped stubs on the ground plane [23], using polarization diversity and ground slots [24], adopting T-stepped ground stub [25], a Y-shaped slot cut at the bottom center of the common ground plane [26], and two inverted L-strips are loaded over a conventional rectangular patch antenna [27]. The antennas discussed in [3–27] have acceptable bandwidth and isolation. Still, most of the designs are not enough compact to fit into the portable devices, and the isolation techniques are a bit complex. Hence, there is a scope for a compact MIMO antenna with high isolation.

In this paper, a simple and compact UWB-MIMO antenna with high isolation using parasitic reflectors is presented. The overall size of the proposed MIMO antenna is \( 0.15\lambda \times 0.27\lambda \) \((16 \times 28 \text{ mm}^2)\), and the antenna elements are separated by a distance of 0.04\( \lambda \) (4 mm). The truncated partial ground provides good impedance performance, and high isolation is achieved by placing parasitic reflectors between the elements. The proposed antenna is also studied by changing the ground length, major axis, and the axial ratio of the antenna element, feed width, and the antenna adjacent parasitic element. The positions of parasitic elements are also essential for isolation improvement. The proposed design achieves wide impedance bandwidth from 2.95 to 15.65 GHz and isolation above 25 dB throughout the band. The advantages of the proposed antenna are compact size, high isolation, high radiation efficiency, good peak gain values, low ECC, high DG values, good TARC values, acceptable MEG values, and low CCL values.

2. ANTENNA DESIGN AND ANALYSIS

The proposed compact structure is designed and simulated using ANSYS HFSS Electronics Desktop 16.2 simulator. The structure is fabricated on a low-cost FR4 material which has relative permittivity \((\varepsilon_r)\) of 4.4 and loss of tangent 0.02. The designed antenna consists of two elliptical-shaped monopole antennas which are separated by parasitic elements. The geometry of the proposed structure is as shown in Figure 1 with the optimization values \( L = 16 \text{ mm}, W = 28 \text{ mm}, S = 4 \text{ mm}, \text{ellipse major axis } (M.A) = 5.8 \text{ mm}, \text{ellipse axial ratio } (A.R) = 0.95, Lg = 3 \text{ mm}, Lf = 7 \text{ mm}, Wf = 1.9 \text{ mm}, A = 10 \text{ mm}, B = 12 \text{ mm}, C = 14 \text{ mm}, D = 0.3 \text{ mm}, E = 2.38 \text{ mm}, \text{and } F = 2.6 \text{ mm}.\)

![Figure 1. Proposed structure geometry.](image)

The evolutionary stages of the proposed structure are described in Figure 2, and the \( S \)-parameters are depicted in Figure 3. In stage 1 (Antenna I), an elliptical-shaped monopole antenna is designed using basic elliptical radiator equations [28]. Due to the compactness of elliptical radiator, partial ground plane, feed width, and substrate dimensions, the antenna resonates from 3.95 GHz to 13.5 GHz with ‘S11’ value of −22.8 dB at 5.45 GHz. However, Antenna I does not cover the lower UWB as
Figure 2. Proposed structure evolution stages.

Figure 3. (a) ‘S11’ values of evolution stages of proposed structure; (b) ‘S21’ values of evolution stages of proposed structure.
observed from Figure 3(a). So, to get impedance matching between the antenna element and port, a small half of the elliptical-shaped strip is removed from the center of the ground in stage 2 (Antenna II) which results in small improvement in the impedance bandwidth from 3.85 to 14.45 GHz with ‘$S_{11}$’ of $-37.8$ dB at 5.6 GHz. In stage 3 (Antenna III), another ellipse-shaped monopole antenna is placed at a distance of 4 mm from the first element to form a MIMO antenna. The isolation of Antenna III is analyzed for different lengths such as 4 mm, 5 mm, 6 mm, 7 mm, and 8 mm. The variation of ‘$S_{11}$’ and ‘$S_{21}$’ values of the MIMO structure with changes in distance $S$ are as shown in Figure 4. It is observed from Figure 4 that as the distance between elements is decreased, the isolation is reduced, but the lower cutoff frequency is moved to a lower value. At $S = 4$ mm, the lower band value is moved to 3.31 GHz due to reflections between elements, and the isolation above 11.3 dB is obtained in the entire band.

To enhance the isolation, a small strip (10 mm × 0.3 mm) is placed between the elements in stage 4 (Antenna IV), which results in the isolation of more than 13 dB. Later in stage 5 (Antenna V), the isolation of greater than 16 dB is achieved by including two parallel strips of dimensions 12 mm × 0.3 mm beside the small strip. In stage 6 (Antenna VI), two more strips are placed, which give rise to the isolation of higher than 19 dB for the entire band. Finally, the proposed antenna, as displayed in stage 7 (Antenna VII), is obtained by adding two parallel strips of size 16 mm × 0.3 mm at the abreast of the strips of Antenna VI. The results in Figure 3(b) show that isolation is greatly improved to more than 25 dB. These strips give good impedance matching and good isolation between elements. The proposed structure covers the entire UWB band, X band, and Ku band applications. Figure 5 illustrates the surface current distribution of Antenna-III to Antenna VII when port 1 is excited. It is observed from the figure that there is a significant improvement in the isolation of currents from port 1 to port 2 when the inclusion of strips is increased.

The parametric study of the ellipse-shaped monopole antenna parameters such as major axis ($M.A$) & axial ratio ($A.R$), ground length, feed width, and parasitic strip length has been done for the optimal values of the proposed structure which is shown in Figure 6. The antenna is analyzed for the values: $M.A = 5.7$ to 5.9 mm and $A.R = 0.9$ to 1.0 mm, $Lg = 2$ to 4 mm, $Wf = 1.6$ to 2.2 mm, and strip length = 12 to 16 mm. The partial ground plane with a truncated structure gives wider bandwidth. The width of the feed plays a key role in impedance matching between port and antenna. As identified from the figure, the desired performance is achieved for the following optimized values: $M.A = 5.8$ mm, $A.R = 0.95$ mm, $Lg = 3$ mm, $Wf = 1.9$ mm, and strip length = 16 mm, and hence are adopted in this work. The effect of elliptical cutting in the ground on impedance matching is also studied and is presented in Figure 7.
Figure 5. Surface current distribution of the evolution stages of the proposed structure, when port 1 is excited.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1. Impedance Performance

The proposed structure is simulated and fabricated, and the parameters are measured. The ‘$S_{11}$’, ‘$S_{22}$’, ‘$S_{12}$’, and ‘$S_{21}$’ values of the fabricated prototype are measured using a vector network analyzer (Agilent N5224A). Figure 8 describes the $S$-parameters of the simulated and fabricated antennas. It is observed that the proposed design operates from 2.95 GHz to 15.65 GHz with resonances at 3.8 GHz, 10.0 GHz, and 13.6 GHz. The measured and simulated results are in good agreement except small deviations due to dielectric losses, conducting losses, tolerances in the soldering and fabrication process. Figure 9 shows the radiation efficiency and peak gain values of the proposed structure. The radiation efficiency of an antenna mainly depends on impedance matching between the port and an antenna element. It is identified that the proposed structure offers high efficiency values between 90 and 97%. The high efficiency antennas are used for rectifying antenna (Rectenna) applications. Also, the peak gain values vary from 1.2 to 5.3 dB in respective bands, and the maximum is 6.8 dB at 11.6 GHz.

The impedance bandwidth of the proposed structure without any parasitic elements is only 3.32–13.2 GHz, and isolation is more than 11.3 dB in the entire band. After placing parasitic strips, the bandwidth is improved to 2.95–15.65 GHz and isolation to above 25 dB in most of the band. Hence, the strips are used for impedance matching and isolation enhancement. Figure 10 illustrates the function of the parasitic strip as a reflector. The surface current distribution and 3-D polar radiation patterns with strips, when port 1 is excited and port 2 terminated and vice-versa, are shown in the same figure. It is seen that the parasitic strips act as reflectors by stopping the surface currents entering from one antenna to another antenna. The middle plots in Figure 10 are 3-D polar radiation patterns of the proposed structure without parasitic strips. The remaining two plots in Figure 10 (left and right) represent the
effect of strips on radiation pattern and stopping the surface currents when port 1 and port 2 are excited with 50Ω strip lines, respectively.

3.2. Radiation Performance

The radiation patterns of the proposed structure are measured in an anechoic chamber. The horn antenna is used as a reference antenna, and the proposed structure is used as an antenna under test. Figure 11 illustrates the simulated and measured 2-D radiation patterns ($E$ and $H$ fields) at various frequencies like 3.8 GHz, 6.0 GHz, 8.0 GHz, 10.0 GHz, and 13.6 GHz in the desired band. It is found that the $E$ and $H$ patterns are bidirectional and omnidirectional, respectively. But at higher frequencies, i.e., at 13.6 GHz, the energy will be distributed to all the modes. Hence, the patterns are disturbed at higher bands.

4. MIMO ANTENNA PERFORMANCE

To investigate the diversity performance of the MIMO antenna, metrics like ECC, DG, TARC, MEG, and CCL are required. The ECC has interpreted the correlation between the channels and will give the
spatial distribution of signal power in an outdoor environment. ECC is measured in different methods like using $S$-parameter values, radiation patterns, both $S$-parameters and radiation efficiencies, and equivalent circuits [29]. Low correlation values indicate good diversity performance. The measurement of ECC using $S$-parameters is a simple and easy technique. The ECC in terms of $S$-parameters for a two-port antenna is represented in Equation (1), and Equation (2) is a representation of ECC measurement using far-field radiation patterns.

$$\rho_{ij} = \frac{- \sum_{n=1}^{N} S_{ni}^* S_{nj}}{\sqrt{\left(1 - \sum_{n=1}^{N} |S_{ni}|^2 \right) \left(1 - \sum_{n=1}^{N} |S_{nj}|^2 \right)}}$$

(1)
where $\rho_{ij}$ is the correlation between the $i$th and $j$th elements of the ‘$N$’ element antenna system. For two-port system, it is represented as

\[
\text{ECC} = \frac{|S_{11}^* S_{12} + S_{21}^* S_{22}|^2}{\left(1 - |S_{11}|^2 - |S_{21}|^2\right) \left(1 - |S_{22}|^2 - |S_{12}|^2\right)}
\]

or

\[
\text{ECC} = \frac{\int \int \left| \vec{F}_i(\theta, \phi) \cdot \vec{F}_j(\theta, \phi) \right|^2 d\Omega}{\int \int |\vec{F}_i(\theta, \phi)|^2 d\Omega \cdot \int \int |\vec{F}_j(\theta, \phi)|^2 d\Omega} \tag{2}
\]

where $\vec{F}_i$ and $\vec{F}_j$ are the $i$th and $j$th antenna radiated fields. The simulated ECC and DG are plotted in Figure 12. The proposed structure has favorable ECC values, which are below 0.04 (acceptable practical value is below 0.5).

The diversity gain (DG) of a two-port MIMO antenna is represented in Equation (3) in terms of ECC and is depicted in Figure 12. The maximum value of DG for the MIMO system is 10 dB. The
progress in the complete band. From Figure 12, it is observed that the proposed structure provides a good diversified performance.

$$DG = 10\sqrt{1 - ECC^2}$$ \hspace{1cm} (3)

In MIMO technology, multiple antennas are placed side by side with a smaller distance at the transmitting and receiving ends for compact device applications. Due to a smaller distance, the radiation of one antenna will affect the parameters of the adjacent antenna. The ‘$S_{11}$’ or ‘$S_{22}$’ of individual antennas does not give faithful results. So, a new term is introduced for the reflection coefficient of the whole system named TARC [30, 31]. It considers the changes in self impedances and mutual impedances between individual antennas. TARC is defined in equation (4), and it is represented in terms of $S$-parameters for the ‘$N$’ elements in Equation (5). Figure 13 shows the comparison (simulated and
Figure 12. Simulated ECC and DG values.

Figure 13. Simulated & measured S11 and TARC values.

measured results) of S11 values of antennas II, III, and S11 & TARC values of the proposed structure. The acceptable values of TARC are less than or equal to ‘0’dB. The simulated and measured TARC values of the proposed structure are below −10dB for the entire band.

\[ \Gamma_a^t = \sqrt{\frac{\text{available power} - \text{radiated power}}{\text{available power}}} = \sqrt{\frac{P_a - P_r}{P_a}} \]  

(4)

\[ \Gamma_a^t = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^N |b_i|^2}{\sum_{i=1}^N |a_i|^2}}, \]  

(5)

where ‘ai’ is the ith port forward wave amplitude, |b| = |S||a|. For two-port antenna system, it is represented as

\[ \text{TARC} = \sqrt{\frac{(S_{11} + S_{12})^2 + (S_{21} + S_{22})^2}{2}} \]
Mean effective gain (MEG) and MEG ratio are essential parameters for estimating the diversity performance of the MIMO antenna, which are given in Equations (6), (7), and (8). Figure 14 shows the simulated and measured results of MEG (mean effective gain) and MEG1/MEG2. The proposed structure gives required MEG and MEG ratio values, which are around $-3$ dB and $0$ dB, respectively. The channel capacity losses mainly depend on the transmission coefficient values of the MIMO structure. The CCL equation in terms of reflection coefficients (‘$S_{11}$’ and ‘$S_{22}$’) and transmission coefficients (‘$S_{12}$’ and ‘$S_{21}$’) for the two-element system are given in Equation (9). The structure has high isolation values above $25$ dB in most of the band. Hence, the proposed structure has low values of channel capacity losses, and these are below $0.2$ bits/sec/Hz for the entire band, as shown in Figure 15.

$$MEG_1 = 1 - |S_{11}|^2 - |S_{12}|^2$$  \quad (6)

$$MEG_2 = 1 - |S_{22}|^2 - |S_{21}|^2$$  \quad (7)

$$MEG_1 \over MEG_2 = 1 - |S_{11}|^2 - |S_{12}|^2$$  \quad (8)

$$CCL = -\log_2 (((1 - |S_{11}|^2 - |S_{12}|^2)(1 - |S_{22}|^2 - |S_{21}|^2)) - ((S_{11}^* S_{12} + S_{21}^* S_{22})(S_{22} S_{21} + S_{12} S_{11})))$$  \quad (9)

The performance comparisons of the proposed structure with other structures in terms of antenna electrical size, impedance bandwidth, isolation, peak gain, radiation efficiency, ECC, and TARC are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1. Performance comparison of the proposed structure with other structures.**

| Reference     | Antenna Size (In terms of $\lambda_0$) | Impedance bandwidth (GHz) | Isolation (Most of the band) (dB) | Peak gain (dB) | Radiation efficiency (%) | ECC | TARC (dB) | Applications     |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|-----|-----------|-----------------|
| Issac et al. [3] | $0.37\lambda_0 \times 0.64\lambda_0$ | 1.6–4                       | $\geq 20$                        | 3.8            | -                        | -   | -         | Wi-Fi, WiMAX    |
| Radhi et al. [4] | $0.48\lambda_0 \times 0.96\lambda_0$ | 3.1–10.6                   | $\geq 31$                        | 3.5 dBi        | $\geq 75$                | $-29$ | -         | UWB             |
| Qinlong et al. [5] | $0.31\lambda_0 \times 0.33\lambda_0$ | 1.56–2.71 & 4.82–5.90     | $\geq 15$                        | -              | $\geq 80$                | 0.04 | -         | GPS             |
| Authors          | λ₀ × λ₀ | Frequency Range | Gain | Reflection Coefficient | Bandwidth | Comments          |
|------------------|---------|-----------------|------|------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Qian et al. [6]  | 0.50λ₀ × 0.60λ₀ | 3–6 | ≥ 21 | - | - | Lower UWB |
| Hao, et al. [7]  | 0.35λ₀ × 0.35λ₀ | 2.3–13 | ≥ 20 | 3–6.1 | - | UWB |
| Li et al. [8]    | 0.35λ₀ × 0.50λ₀ | 3–11 | ≥ 25 | > 3 | ≥ 80 | UWB |
| Amjad et al. [9] | 0.69λ₀ × 0.82λ₀ | 5.61–5.93 | ≥ 20 | - | - | WiMAX |
| Amjad et al. [10]| 0.25λ₀ × 0.41λ₀ | 2.5–14.5 | ≥ 20 | 0.3–4.3 | - | UWB |
| Park et al. [11] | 0.35λ₀ × 0.36λ₀ | 3–9 | ≥ 17 | 1–5.5 dBi | ≥ 87 | UWB |
| Zhu et al. [12]  | 0.35λ₀ × 0.35λ₀ | 3–12 | ≥ 20 | - | - | UWB |
| Deng et al. [13] | 0.30λ₀ × 0.41λ₀ | 3.1–10.6 | ≥ 16 | - | ≥ 70 | UWB |
| Zhang et al. [14]| 0.34λ₀ × 0.36λ₀ | 3.1–5 | ≥ 22 | - | - | UWB |
| Ankan, et al. [15]| 0.17λ₀ × 0.23λ₀ | 2–10.6 | ≥ 22 | > 3.5 dBi | - | UWB |
| Mchbal, et al. [16]| 0.26λ₀ × 0.32λ₀ | 3.1–11.1 | ≥ 20 | - | - | UWB |
| Rohit, et al. [17]| 0.20λ₀ × 0.40λ₀ | 3–11 | ≥ 15 | 1.5–5 | ≥ 80 | UWB |
| Liu et al. [18]  | 0.22λ₀ × 0.37λ₀ | 3.1–11 | ≥ 15 | 1–5 dBi | ≥ 70 | UWB |
| Rohit, et al. [19]| 0.20λ₀ × 0.35λ₀ | 3.1–11 | ≥ 20 | 3–4 | ≥ 75 | UWB |
| Li et al. [20]   | 0.25λ₀ × 0.25λ₀ | 2.9–11.6 | ≥ 16 | 0–6 dBi | - | UWB |
| Prashant et al. [21]| 0.61λ₀ × 0.77λ₀ | 8.0–11.5 | ≥ 20 | - | ≥ 85 | ~ 0 | ≤ –10 Upper UWB |
| Chandel et al. [22]| 0.16λ₀ × 0.33λ₀ | 2.8–20 | ≥ 20 | 1.6–6 | - | UWB X band and Ku |
| Chandel et al. [23]| 0.17λ₀ × 0.32λ₀ | 2.9–20 | ≥ 20 | 0–7 | ≥ 75 | 0.01 | ≤ –20 UWB X band and Ku |
| Aziz et al. [24] | 0.36λ₀ × 0.47λ₀ | 5.19–5.41 & 7.30–7.66 | ≥ 22.5 | - | ≥ 79.8 | 0.13 & 0.002 | ≤ –10 WLAN & X band |
| Ling et al. [25] | 0.21λ₀ × 0.27λ₀ | 3.1–11 | ≥ 15 | 1–3 | ≥ 70 | 0.03 | UWB |
| Tao et al. [26]  | 0.18λ₀ × 0.23λ₀ | 3–12.4 | ≥ 20 | 4 | ≥ 70 | 0.1 | UWB |
| Anil et al. [27] | 0.14λ₀ × 0.24λ₀ | 2.87–17 | ≥ 21 | 0–6 | - | UWB X band and Ku |
| Proposed         | 0.15λ₀ × 0.27λ₀ | 2.95–15.65 | ≥ 25 | 1.2–6.8 | ≥ 90 | 0.04 | UWB X band and Ku |
tabulated in Table 1. It is found that the proposed structure has several advantages like very compact size, wide impedance bandwidth, high isolation and radiation efficiency, low ECC, and good TARC values.

5. CONCLUSIONS

A compact UWB-MIMO antenna with high isolation using parasitic reflectors is presented in this communication. The overall structure size is $0.15\lambda_0 \times 0.27\lambda_0$ and consists of two ellipse-shaped radiators with parasitic strips which are used for isolation enhancement. The results demonstrate that the proposed structure operates from 2.95 to 15.65 GHz with good impedance matching. The high isolation of greater than 25 dB is attained in most of the band with the inclusion of parasitic strips between the elements. Also, the peak gain values of 1.2–6.8 dB and radiation efficiency values of above 90% are achieved. It also offers low ECC ($< 0.04$), high DG ($> 9.996$ dB), satisfactory TARC ($\leq -10$ dB), MEG ($\sim -3$ dB), and CCL (0.2 bits/sec/Hz). Thus, the proposed structure is suitable for UWB, X band, and Ku band applications.

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