Novel Cloud-RRH Architecture With Radio Resource Management and QoS Strategies for 5G HetNets

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ABSTRACT With the increase of data traffic in the global mobile network, the limitation in resources of data computing close to the edge is becoming an important issue to resolve. This article addresses the cloud radio access network (CRAN) in 5G HetNets architecture and proposes to take benefit of extra computing and storage resources in the edge to enable the offloading of a set of mobile user services from the remote cloud computing servers to an edge cloud computing infrastructure deployed next to remote radio heads (RRHs) to better serve mobile users and improve energy efficiency. However, this architecture poses many challenges. The first one is related to the clustering of the various deployed RRH to better serve end-users. For that, we propose a two-stage RRH clustering mechanism in order to fully exploit the benefits of C-RAN architecture. The second challenge is related to the scheduling of the offloading. Therefore, we propose a cost-based scheduling scheme (CBSS) that aims to minimize the scheduling cost while considering resource availability in the infrastructure, resource requirements from users’ applications, services execution deadlines, and load balancing. The proposed solution permits us to make better offloading decisions and to improve the users’ experiences. The solution was implemented in a simulator to highlight its performances and compare them with other existing approaches.

INDEX TERMS Cloud RAN, 5G HetNets, edge Cloud-RRH, radio resource management, offloading, resource scheduling, resource cost.

I. INTRODUCTION

The evolution toward global mobile networks has been characterized by an exponential traffic growth during the last years. The network traffic has roughly doubled every year since 2011 [1]. This growth is mainly due to the huge success of smartphones and tablets and emerging applications. Currently, smartphones and tablets are powerful enough to run a large variety of applications (entertainment, health care, business, social networking, traveling, news, etc.). Many of these applications are based on a client/server model with a light client running in the mobile device (i.e., native or web client) and a heavy server running in the cloud, thereby overcoming the limited capacities of end-user mobile devices. This necessitates to setup end-to-end communication from the mobile terminal to the application or service logic running in the far-end cloud computing infrastructure.

Mobile Cloud Computing (MCC) has been introduced to allow the execution of the application or service logic closer to the user localization. For that, it advocates the deployment of additional cloud computing resources in the edge network to run some applications and eventually improving the end-user experience by reducing the response times since the requests of the application clients are processed in the
edge cloud computing infrastructure and not in the far end cloud computing infrastructure.

In the 5G network architecture, a cloud-based radio access network has been proposed for decoupling the baseband units (BBUs) from remote radio heads (RRHs) and for moving them into the cloud to enable centralized processing and management. With this approach, a complex base-station operation can be simplified to cost-effective and power-efficient RRHs by centralizing the processing. This simplification facilitates the efficient management of large-scale small-cell systems.

In conventional mobile network architecture, one BBU is logically associated with only one RRH. Therefore, radio resources may be underutilized since one RRH may not consume all the available BBU resources. Moreover, this one-to-one assignment is very expensive for 5G networks, where a large number of small cells will be deployed. Cloud RAN (C-RAN) architecture solves this problem by allowing a one-to-many mapping between BBUs and RRHs. Thus, BBU radio resources could be more efficiently used, decreasing not only the cost of infrastructure but also its energy consumption.

Another important mechanism that is used in this work is the Mobile data offloading. This mechanism aims to benefit from external additional communication resources (such as the availability of Wi-Fi network access at the same location as cellular networks) to migrate the communication of the data from the mobile network access to the other access to benefit of its higher capacities. The concept of offloading can also be applied to the processing resources and in this case, the objective is to migrate the communication of the data to the near system where there are additional storage and processing resources. Offloading has also been used with IoT in order to improve traffic management. In fact, with the explosive growth of connected objects and the corresponding IoT applications, massive traffic needs to be processed in time. To deal with this challenge, offloading tasks to fog nodes was proposed [43].

Several state-of-the-art approaches have exploited cloud computing technology for this purpose [2]. However, these approaches have mainly introduced the computing capacities in the core network and not on the edge of the network with the risk of degrading the performances if the geographic distance with the users is far. Indeed, the offloading benefits may be easily wasted and energy consumption increased.

In this work, we propose a novel cloud RAN heterogeneous architecture, namely, Edge Cloud-RRH that aims to introduce an edge cloud computing infrastructure close to the C-RAN infrastructure introduced by 5G networks. In this approach, we propose adding additional computational and storage resources to high RRH infrastructures (macrocells) installed in the edge network close to mobile end-users. With this infrastructure, it will be possible to offload (i.e., move closer) applications/services from the far end cloud computing infrastructure close to install and execute them in the edge cloud computing infrastructure, the Edge Cloud-RRH allowing short distance interaction between the end-users terminals and the applications/services servers. The technology that is able to support this offloading is named containerization [3]. It provides a resource abstraction in terms of virtualization and isolation based on containers that surpass other virtualization techniques. To fully capitalize on the proposed architecture, we further introduce radio resource management (RRM) strategies that aim to efficiently schedule offloading requests among the containers. The proposed solution encompasses a two-stage RRH clustering mechanism and a cost-based task scheduling scheme to reduce the overload and the migration costs.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows. Section II discusses relevant literature and the motivation for this work. Section III describes preliminaries and the system model of our proposed approach and provides an overview of the operational aspect of the solution. Then, the radio resource management strategies are introduced in Section IV, together with the proposed solution algorithms. Performance evaluation of the strategies is presented in Section V. Finally, Section VI presents the conclusions of this work and envisioned future work.

II. RELATED WORK
In this section, we present and discuss several studies that have considered resource management in C-RAN RRH heterogeneous networks.

A. RRH CLUSTERING
RRH clustering has already been proposed in the literature for many purposes. In [4], the authors formulated the problem of RRH clustering as a bin packing problem. They proposed optimal and heuristic solutions to improve network energy consumption without compromising the QoS (Quality of Service) expressed as numbers of required resource blocks in available RRHs. In [5], the authors studied the problem of joint activation and clustering of RRH to improve user utility function. They introduced a coverage constraint to the problem formulation to ensure the connectivity for all end-users. The overall end-user QoS is defined as a weighted sum of SIR (signal to interference ratio) and the average number of users assigned to one RRH. In another work [6], authors proposed a lightweight and load aware dynamic RRH assignment (DRA) algorithm. The proposed algorithm reduced the complexity of the clustering procedure and offered quite close BBU resource savings as compared to FFD (First Fit Decreasing). In [7], the authors introduced a greedy RRH clustering algorithm for C-RAN downlink, which aims to maximize the sum-rate gain and reduce network piloting overhead. Authors in [8] presented a greedy dynamic RRH clustering mechanism-based multi-objective optimization to balance the throughput maximization and RRH energy consumption minimization. In [9], the authors focused on delay-tolerant best-effort traffic to derive a dynamic clustering and user scheduling approach for cooperative base stations. In [41], the authors proposed to jointly optimize RRHs clustering
and beamforming assignment in Cloud-RAN downlink. They developed a heuristic algorithm to provide sub-optimal performance by Dinkelbach’s transformation. Next, to handle non-convex formulation, they proposed an iterative approximation algorithm with linear approximation and constraints relaxation.

In all these works, the proposed approaches were focused on homogeneous scenarios (i.e., clustering one type of cooperating RRHs). However, 5G systems are deemed to be heterogeneous networks with various type of RRHs associated with the different types of cells (macro and small).

In our work, we address explicitly the heterogeneity in the Cloud RAN architecture and we propose a two stages RRH clustering mechanism. In the first step, we propose to use a fuzzy logic controller to cluster Low RRHs (small cells) considering their inter and intracluster interferences. In the second step, we propose to cluster High RRHs (macro-cells) considering the global system interference and the BBU system capabilities. The problem is modelled as a linear program optimization and a heuristic resolution algorithm. The aim is to study different RRHs clustering techniques in order to reduce network power consumption and resource utilization while assuring the required level of QoS to end-users applications.

B. OFFLOADING

Offloading mobile data from cellular networks to Wi-Fi and vice versa has become an important feature in cellular networks for alleviating the impact of data on the quality of cellular connections.

Various cloud offloading systems were proposed in the literature [10], [12]. MAUI [11] and ThinkAir [12] profile hardware components and perform offloading to optimize mobile devices’ energy consumption. These approaches consider only the energy consumption but unfortunately, ignore other offloading aspects that may impact the service quality. CloneCloud [13] optimizes mobile applications’ partitioning between local executions (in the mobile terminal) and offloading the execution in the cloud computing with the objective of minimizing the execution time or the energy consumption.

In addition to mobile cloud frameworks, other research efforts focused on offloading decision-making. For example, Yuh-Shyan et al. [14] proposed an energy-aware data offloading scheme for C-RANs in which a BBU takes the offloading decisions considering the mobile terminal’s transmission rate and energy consumption of both the cellular network and the Wi-Fi network. The main strategy of C-RAN is to schedule the offloading decision of a mobile terminal from the RRH to the Wi-Fi access point. The proposed scheme eventually reduced the energy consumption and improved the throughput of the network. However, the performance improvement was readily observable only if the data size is sufficiently large.

Another offloading decision algorithm in the context of the femto-cloud paradigm is proposed by Oueis et al. in [15]. The algorithm performs a series of classifications that consider several parameters, including the latency, battery level, and mobile terminal memory, without including them in a complex optimization problem. The proposed algorithm categorizes the application tasks into “urgent” and “not urgent” and sends urgent and offloadable tasks to the femto-cloud regardless of the channel conditions. This strategy affects mobile handset’s energy consumption and violates the latency constraints if the total offloading exceeds a certain threshold (3%).

In [16], Ting-Yi et al. proposed a context-aware decision algorithm (CADA) for offloading mobile applications to the cloud servers. The decision engine is composed of four components: a context-aware decision algorithm, a context profiler, an energy model, and a context database. Through the context profiler, CADA uses the location and the time of day in its decision-making for the application of individual methods. However, such profiling is a source of overhead and requires extensive memory for storing and processing users’ profiles.

In [40], the authors’ objective was to jointly optimize the task offloading decision, elastic computation resource scheduling, and radio resource allocation. They formulated the problem as a stochastic mixed-integer nonlinear programming problem. They eventually theoretically analyzed the tradeoff between energy efficiency and service delay.

Various factors have been considered in the offloading decisions introduced in the literature. In [17], Huijun et al. proposed an offloading decision model that takes network unavailability into consideration. Based on the network connection states and durations that are recorded in a history buffer, the partition of the application is calculated, such that to improving the performance of a network. Based on the level of improvement, the decision offloading is validated or not. The proposed algorithm enhances network performances in terms of execution time and energy consumption; however, system’s complexity increases with the number of mobile users.

In summary, mobile cloud offloading was already studied for various networks and several decision algorithms were proposed. The proposed solutions exploited multiple-objective optimization techniques. However, due to the changes in the network states, a decision must be refreshed if the system conditions change.

C. SCHEDULING CONSIDERATIONS

Scheduling user’s computing tasks is a key challenge in a cloud computing environment. The optimal allocation of resources and scheduling of the offloading requests helps to guarantee application performance and reduce operating costs. Several existing works have addressed these issues and are discussed in this section.

In [18], Katyal and Mishra proposed a selection algorithm that uses the standard deviation to decide which scheduling algorithm to use among two; namely, Min-Min and Max-Min, for minimizing the total execution time of tasks. In [19],
an improved Max-Min algorithm is modified by Santhosh and Manjaiah to define two new algorithms based on the average execution time. In contrast to Max-Min, a task with a run time that is slightly above the average run time is selected and assigned to the resource that yields the minimum run time. The average run time is calculated via the arithmetic mean for independent tasks and via the geometric mean for dependent tasks. The main objective is to reduce task makespan. Barbarossa et al. proposed a task scheduler with three priority levels [20]: the scheduling level, which represents the objective to be achieved by the planner; the resource level that represents the available attributes to fulfill the desired objective; and the task level, which represents the available alternatives among which the best task should be scheduled first. Therefore, each task requests resources under a preset priority and is scheduled accordingly. In [21], Thomas et al. proposed a task scheduler that is based on credits. In this approach, tasks are assigned credits based on two parameters, namely, the user priority and the task duration, and the task with the highest credit value is executed first. A scheduler that is based on particle swarm optimization (PSO) was proposed by Khalili and Babamir in [22]. PSO is a population-based search algorithm that is inspired by bird flocking and fish schooling, where each particle learns from its neighbors and itself during the time it travels in space. As with other metaheuristics, this PSO-based scheduler does not offer guarantees or bounds on the generated solution, especially as the search space expands.

Himani and Sidhu proposed a cost-deadline based (CDB) scheduler in [23], where the scheduling cost is calculated according to the task length, the deadline, and the number of required processing elements. Then, tasks are sorted to determine the execution order via a task-to-VM mapping that is based on a Min-Min heuristic. Via this approach, the CDB minimizes missed deadlines.

In [24], the authors have investigated cost-based scheduling using linear programming. They have proposed a task scheduling algorithm that is based on delay bound constraint (SAH-DB) for improving the task execution concurrency: when a task is received, all the resources (CPU, memory, and network) are sorted in descending order of the resource processing capacity; then, the task is dispatched to resources with the minimum execution time.

In this article, we propose a novel CRAN architecture in which an Edge Cloud-RRH is introduced into the edge network. By Edge Cloud-RRH we mean, cloud computing capabilities associated with the RRH and able to support the execution of containers. While most previous works have focused on the job completion time, we propose in this work resource management strategies based on a joint offloading and scheduling optimization mechanism aim to reduce the cost of task scheduling across all application tasks encapsulated in containers. While most previous works have focused on the job completion time, we model the cost of tasks as a function of the overloading state, delay time, and migration time. The scheduling process is implemented considering the available resources, the resource requirements, deadline, and load balancing in the Edge Cloud-RRH infrastructure.

III. SYSTEM MODEL AND OPERATION OVERVIEW

A. PRELIMINARIES

The objective of the proposed approach is to overcome the challenges that are presented by the exponential increase in mobile data traffic. Via a CRAN-based framework, the proposed system aims to optimize the delay, throughput, and application response time. The presented strategies for resource management in 5G HetNets with cloud management target offloading and scheduling algorithms that are dynamic and computationally efficient.

The proposed novel CRAN framework is illustrated in Figure 1. It is characterized by a heterogeneous-access architecture composed of macrocell (managed by High-RRHs or H-RRHs) and small cells (managed by Low-RRHs or L-RRHs). It also introduces an edge-cloud infrastructure, namely, Edge Cloud-RRH. It is connected to the H-RRHs using high-speed fibers links or alternatively high-speed radio links.

In traditional CRANs, all RAN functionalities are centralized in BBU pools. In this work, we propose a flexible division of the functionalities between edge and central
B. VIRTUAL MACHINES VS. CONTAINERS

In this section, we motivate the use of containers over virtual machines (VMs) in our architecture. Figure 2 serves as a reference for the argument.

Machine virtualization requires that the full guest OS (operating system) images are instantiated in each deployed VM. In addition, all binaries (Bins) and libraries (Libs) are necessary for running user applications. Such requirements result in slow VM initialization and sometimes degradation of performances.

Meanwhile, containers represent a virtualization solution that is flexible and lightweight. Recall that containers are packaged, self-contained, ready-to-deploy parts of applications that may, if necessary, include middleware and business logic in the form of binaries and libraries that are needed for running user applications [25], [32], [34]. Containers a) have a lightweight, portable runtime; b) facilitate the development, testing, and deployment of applications to many servers; and c) facilitate the interconnection between applications.

In current datacenters, the control of VMs entails the use of a virtual infrastructure manager (VIM) to oversee the VM lifecycle. Similarly, we introduce in our solution, a new functional entity, namely, the containers’ manager (CM), for overseeing container placement/deployment, container monitoring, and application scheduling.

Using the CM, mobile users can access their services directly in the edge cloud by requesting the CM to instantiate them in the edge and request an offloading (in part or in whole) of the service logic computation from the far cloud computing into these containers. Furthermore, containers need not to be always active; rather, they can be activated or deactivated as needed. These different interaction schemes are illustrated in Figure 3. End-user terminal can trigger an offloading request (Off Req) to the CM (in red). The CM schedule this request and execute it. It then sends back offloading responses (Off Res) to the CM (in green).

C. PROBLEM DEFINITION

In conventional architectures, one BBU is logically associated with one RRH. Therefore, radio resources may be underutilized since one RRH may not consume all the resources of the BBU but cannot be used by other RRH. Moreover, this one-to-one assignment is very expensive for 5G networks, where a massive number of cells is deployed. Cloud RAN architecture resolves this problem by allowing a one-to-many mapping between BBUs and RRHs. Thus, we propose to efficiently cluster RRHs in order to allocate a pool of BBU to each cluster and allow them to share the same pool of resources. This will eventually improve the utilization of the resources, reduce the power consumption, and maintain the same quality of service level as the one-to-one mapping case with an appropriate clustering and scheduling.

In the proposed architecture, the mobile application may be moved to the Edge Cloud-RRH infrastructure and executed as tasks. This will reduce the response time of the applications and eventually increase the end-user experience. The CM is responsible for deciding which application tasks are to be executed. In this scheme, a container is characterized by the three-tuple (CPU, RAM, and network bandwidth). We consider that the request from the end-users equipment is composed of a set of tasks to instantiate in the Edge Cloud-RRH. Each task is associated with its execution delay constraint and resource requirements in terms of CPU, RAM and network bandwidth.

The CM should execute a scheduling algorithm to accommodate a substantially important number of offloading requests. The following section addresses two objectives when designing the scheduler:

a) the scheduler should consider the overloading and migration costs (minimization) when selecting the right container to execute the application task.

b) the schedule should take into account the level of load of each Edge Cloud-RRH to achieve a load balancing between them and achieve better scalability.

IV. RRM STRATEGIES FOR EDGE CLOUD-RRH WITH QOS AND COST OPTIMIZATION

A. RRH CLUSTERING STRATEGY

First of all, we propose a two-stage control loop for our heterogeneous C-RAN system. The first loop involves the decision of L-RRH clustering, while the second loop involves...
the decision of H-RRH clustering. The decision-making process of the first loop should be aware of intra- and inter-cluster interference and traffic load of all base stations in order to define a clustering schema that minimizes these interferences. Furthermore, the second loop’s decision-making process should be aware of system interference and BBU capacity. The global objective is eventually to enhance the QoS, reduce the resource utilization and power consumption.

1) INTERFERENCE COORDINATION MODEL
In our architecture, end-user terminals can be either connected to L-RRH or H-RRH. The user terminals are connected to the RRH that provides them the best SINR. However, for H-RRH clusters, we will consider both intra-cluster and inter-cluster interference. For L-RRHs clustering (first stage of our clustering mechanism), we propose to use a fuzzy logic controller (FLC) in order to reduce uncertainties in clusters creation and reduce overhead while considering a multitude of parameters.

For L-RRHs clustering, we will apply a triangular membership function, giving accurate and exact values. Membership functions for SINR variables which are SINR, load level of L-RRH, and load level of H-RRH are represented in Figure 5. The first is the fuzzification. It consists of mapping each crisp input into a fuzzy variable. In our work, we will consider three variables which are SINR, load level of L-RRH, and load level of H-RRH. We chose to use the load level as the number of used RB (Resource Blocks). We divide each variable into three fuzzy levels: low, medium and high. Mapping is done using a membership function which defines the membership degree of the crisp input with the fuzzy variable. In our case, we will apply a triangular membership function, giving accurate and exact values. Membership functions for SINR H-RRH load and L-RRH load are represented in Figure 5.

where $P_{BB}$ is energy consumed by the BBU and $\sum_{i=1}^{n} P_{RRH_i}$ is the sum of energy consumed by all RRHs allocated to this BBU at instant $t$. The power consumed by a RRH is given by the following expression:

$$P_{RRH} = \frac{P_r}{\eta_{PA}} + (P_{RF} \times N_{TRX})$$

where $P_r$ is the radiated power, $\eta_{PA}$ is the power amplifier efficiency, $P_{RF}$ is the power consumed by radio frequency circuits, and $N_{TRX}$ is the number of transceiver antennas.

The total energy consumed by a BBU pool is given by the following expression:

$$P_{BBU-Pool} = \sum P_{BBU} + P_I$$

3) L-RRHS CLUSTERING

For L-RRHs clustering, we will consider both intra-cluster and inter-cluster interference. However, for H-RRH clustering, we will assume zero-forcing (ZF) precoding. Therefore, intra-cluster interferences are eliminated and the SINR, when the precoding weight between user $i$ and RRH $r$, $p_{r,i}$, is the corresponding transmission power, $p_{r,i}$, is the received power at user $i$ from L-RRH $r$ and $\sigma^2$ is the noise. We assume $h_{i,r}$ the channel between a user $i$ and a L-RRH $r$ to be distributed as a Rayleigh random variable and counting pathloss.

$$SINR_{i,j} = \frac{p_{r,i}^2}{\sum_{r \in C_{j,l}} |h_{i,r}w_{i,r}|^2 p_{r,i}^2 + \sigma^2}$$

(1)

where $C_{l}$ is the RRH cluster containing L-RRH $j$, $C_r$ are other L-RRH clusters which don’t contain L-RRH $j$, $h_{i,r}$ is the channel vector of user $i$ served by L-RRH $r$, $w_{i,r}$ is the precoding weight between user $i$ and RRH $r$, $p_{r,i}$ is the corresponding transmission power, $p_{r,i}$ is the received power at user $i$ from L-RRH $r$ and $\sigma^2$ is the noise. We assume $h_{i,r}$ the channel between a user $i$ and a L-RRH $r$ to be distributed as a Rayleigh random variable and counting pathloss. The first interference term, $\sum_{r \in C_{j,l}} |h_{i,r}w_{i,r}|^2 p_{r,i}^2$, stands for the intra-cluster interference. It depends on the coordination strategy used within this L-RRH cluster. The second term, $\sum_{r \in C_{j,l}} p_{r,i}^2$, stands for the inter-cluster interference.

For L-RRH clustering, we will consider both intra-cluster and inter-cluster interference. However, for H-RRH clustering, we will assume zero-forcing (ZF) precoding. Therefore, intra-cluster interferences are eliminated and the SINR, when a user $i$ is associated with H-RRH $j$, is formulated as follows:

$$SINR_{i,j} = \frac{p_{j,i}^2}{\sum_{k \in C_{H}\cap C_{l}} p_{j,k}^2 + \sigma^2}$$

(2)

where $C_H$ is the RRH cluster containing H-RRH $j$, $C_k$ are other H-RRH clusters that don’t contain H-RRH $j$.

2) ENERGY MODEL

Besides radio performance improvement, Cloud RAN architecture enables high energy savings, essentially thanks to efficient radio network hardware utilization. In order to estimate energy saving, we adopt an energy consumption model where the BBU and RRH power consumption are measured separately [35]. The total power consumed by a BBU at time $t$ is formulated by the following equation:

$$P_{BBU_t} = P_{BB} + \sum_{i=1}^{n} P_{RRH_i}$$

(3)
In the second step, inference is modelled as a set of fuzzy rules. We have specified and applied 27 rules that are summarized in Table 1. In defuzification step, the output action which is denoted here by the probability that a particular L-RRH is added to the cluster C, is given by the gravity center of conclusions \( c \) in each rule weighted by the membership function using the following expression:

\[
a(x_1, x_2, x_3) = \frac{\sum_{l=1}^{27} \mu_l(x_1)\mu_l(x_2)\mu_l(x_3)c_l}{\sum_{l=1}^{27} \mu_l(x_1)\mu_l(x_2)\mu_l(x_3)}
\]  

(7)

4) H-RRH CLUSTERING

H-RRH clustering objective is to allow obviously a better resource utilization by avoiding one-to-one mapping between BBUs and H-RRHs. The aim of clustering is to reduce the number of used BBUs in order to decrease the network energy consumption.

We propose here to model the problem as an optimization problem under resources’ constraints. We consider a system composed of a set of n H-RRHs, each with an average RBs demand \( d_1, \ldots, d_n \) and m user terminals \( u_1, \ldots, u_m \). We consider that each BBUs has the capacity to simultaneously process \( K \) RBs.

The optimization problem consists of finding the minimum number of BBUs \( B \leq n \) and a \( B \)-partition \( C_{l_1} \cup C_{l_2} \cup \ldots \cup C_{l_B} \) of the set of n H-RRHs such that \( \sum_{i \in C_{l_k}} d_i \leq K \) (each BBU cannot process a sum of demands higher than its capacity). The solution is optimal when \( B \) is minimal.

We introduce two binary variables \( x_{(i,j)} \) to indicate if a H-RRH is added to a cluster or not:

\[
x_{(i,j)} = \begin{cases} 
1 & \text{if } H - RRHi \text{ is added to cluster } j \\
0 & \text{otherwise}
\end{cases}
\]

And \( b_i \) to indicate if a BBU is active or not:

\[
b_i = \begin{cases} 
1 & \text{if a BBU is active} \\
0 & \text{otherwise}
\end{cases}
\]

\[
\begin{cases} 
1 & \text{if } H - RRH \text{ i is added to cluster } j \\
0 & \text{otherwise}
\end{cases}
\]

The linear programming formulation of the problem is as follows:

Minimize \( B = \sum_{i=1}^{n} b_i \)

Subject to

\[
\begin{align*}
\sum_{j=1}^{n} d_j x_{(i,j)} & \leq K b_i, \quad \forall i \in \{1, \ldots, n\} \\
\sum_{i=1}^{n} x_{(i,j)} & = 1, \quad \forall j \in \{1, \ldots, n\}
\end{align*}
\]  

(8) (9)

The optimization is subject to constraints given by (8) and (9). Constraint (8) guarantees that BBU maximum capacity is not exceeded, i.e., the sum of loads from the cluster

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**TABLE 1. FLC rules for L-RRHs clustering.**

| Rule | SINR | L-RRH Load | H-RRH Load | Cluster membership |
|------|------|------------|------------|-------------------|
| 1    | Low  | Low        | Low        | Out               |
| 2    | Low  | Low        | Medium     | Out               |
| 3    | Low  | Low        | High       | Out               |
| 4    | Low  | Medium     | Low        | Out               |
| 5    | Low  | Medium     | Medium     | Out               |
| 6    | Low  | Medium     | High       | Out               |
| 7    | Low  | High       | Low        | Out               |
| 8    | Low  | High       | Medium     | Out               |
| 9    | Low  | High       | High       | Out               |
| 10   | Medium | Low      | Low         | In                |
| 11   | Medium | Medium   | Medium     | In                |
| 12   | Medium | Low      | High       | Out               |
| 13   | Medium | Medium   | Low        | In                |
| 14   | Medium | Medium   | Medium     | In                |
| 15   | Medium | Medium   | High       | Out               |
| 16   | Medium | High      | Low        | Out               |
| 17   | Medium | High      | Medium     | Out               |
| 18   | Medium | High      | High       | Out               |
| 19   | High  | Low       | Low        | In                |
| 20   | High  | Low       | Medium     | In                |
| 21   | High  | Low       | High       | Out               |
| 22   | High  | Medium    | Low        | In                |
| 23   | High  | Medium    | Medium     | In                |
| 24   | High  | Medium    | High       | Out               |
| 25   | High  | High      | Low        | Out               |
| 26   | High  | High      | Medium     | Out               |
| 27   | High  | High      | High       | Out               |
of H-RRHs associated with a BBU does not exceed the BBU peak capacity. Constraint (9) ensures the fact that each H-RRH is associated with exactly one cluster.

H-RRH clustering is formulated as a modified one-dimensional bin packing problem. Since the bin packing problem is NP-hard [10], it is hard to find an optimal solution in large network systems. Therefore, we propose a heuristic algorithm to cluster H-RRHs. The proposed algorithm is inspired from Best Fit Decreasing (BFD) and Worst Fit Decreasing (WFD) strategies [10], however, it has the particularity to fill all unused resource blocks and reduce the number of BBUs.

The proposed heuristic algorithm is specified in the following Algorithm 1. R stands for the set of H-RRHs \( r \), \( d \) is the set of their demands expressed in term of the number of requested RBs per frame (sum all terminals demands in the same cluster) and \( C \) represents the set of remaining candidate H-RRHs to cluster (C is initialized to R). The proposed heuristic algorithm implements the following steps:

- Sort the set of demands \( D \) in a decreasing order.
- Select the H-RRH \( r_h \) with the highest demand and for cluster \( C_r \).
- Form the set \( R' \) of H-RRHs \( r_n \in R' \subset R \) that can be clustered with \( r_h \) and the set \( D' \) of their associated demands \( d_n \in D' \subset D \).
- Select from \( R' \) the H-RRH \( r_s \) with the smallest RB demand in order to first be clustered with \( r_h \), subject to \( r_h + r_s \leq K \), where \( K \) is the maximum capacity of a BBU expressed in the number of available RBs.
- Add \( r_s \) to \( C_r \) and update its cluster \( r_{h,s} \) with its demand \( d_{h,s} \).
- If \( r_h + r_s \leq K \) is not satisfied, \( r_h \) to which it belongs cannot be extended and the algorithm repeats with the following H-RRH that comes straight below \( r_h \).
- The algorithm is performed until no more clustering can be performed.

**Algorithm 1 H-RRH Clustering Algorithm**

1. Initialize \( d \)
2. Attribute \( d \) to \( r \)
3. Initialize \( C = R \)
4. Repeat
5. Sort \( d \) \( \in D \)
6. Select \( d_h = \max d_i \) and its associated \( r_h \)
7. Form \( D' \subset D \) and \( R' \subset R \)
8. Select \( d_s = \min d_n \), \( d_s \subset D' \)
9. If \( d_h + d_s \leq K \) then
10. \( r_{h,s} \leftarrow r_h \cup r_s \)
11. \( d_{h,s} \leftarrow d_h + d_s \)
12. Update D, R and C
13. Else
14. \( C \leftarrow C - \{r_h\} \)
15. Select \( d' \) \( \leftarrow \max d_i \)
16. \( r_h \leftarrow r_h \)
17. Go to step 7
18. Until \( C = \emptyset \)

When this algorithm is executed, it results in a set of clusters of H-RRHs that are grouped together in clusters, each being served by the same BBU. The number of assigned BBUs is eventually lower than the number of RRHs and a sum of demands in each cluster lower than the maximum capacity of a BBU. This eventually allows saving the energy consumption of all the inactivated BBUs while maintaining the QoS of the end-users.

**B. OFFLOADING STRATEGY**

Regarding the offloading strategy, the general principle is illustrated in Figure 6.

When a Mobile Terminal should execute a heavy application task, it takes a decision regarding the local execution of the task or its possible offloading. Examples of criteria maybe time-delay, energy-saving, end-user policy, etc. If the decision is to offload the task, it triggers an offloading request to the serving RRH.

The offloading request specifies a six-tuple, namely, \((\text{TaskID}, S_{TD}, \text{CAP} \_{MT}, \text{CAP}, E_{loc}, B)\), where \( S_{TD} \) is the size of the task, \( \text{CAP} \_{MT} \) is the mobile terminal’s capacity, \( \text{CAP} \) is the capacity that is required by the received task, \( E_{loc} \) is the energy that is expended for local execution and \( B \) is the bandwidth that is needed between the RRH and the mobile terminal.

The Containers’ Manager (as shown in Figure 6), processes the offloading request and if granted, it sends a resource allocation request to the serving container to specify the required capacity after receiving the task code. Once processed, an offloading response will be routed to the mobile terminal. The Cloud RAN maintains a set of active containers to execute end-users tasks at the edge of the network. The CM maintains an up-to-date state of the load of the containers in order to schedule the execution of the end-users tasks depending on their size and their deadlines. It also performs load balancing between active containers for better use of the resources.

The bandwidth of the uplink connection between the mobile terminal and the serving RRH is assumed to be \( B \). Following the notation in [30], [33], we denote the time that is required for transmitting \( S_{up} \) bits in uplink with rate \( r_{up} \) by \( t_{up} \), namely, \( t_{up} = S_{up}/r_{up} \). Similarly, for the downlink transmission requirement for remote processing from the Edge Cloud-RRH to the serving RRH, \( t_{dl} = S_{dl}/r_{dl} \).

For power consumption at the mobile terminal in the uplink and the downlink, we adopt the following models:

\[
p_{up} = k_{tx,1} + k_{tx,2} \cdot p_{tx} \tag{10}
\]
\[
p_{dl} = k_{rx,1} + k_{rx,2} \cdot P_{rx} \tag{11}
\]

In the above, \( k_{tx,1}, k_{tx,2}, k_{rx,1}, k_{rx,2} \) and \( r_{tx,2} \) are constants that are evaluated based on measurements that are provided in [27], [32]. Respectively, the constants correspond to the uplink baseline power, the uplink power that is associated with the transmission, the downlink baseline power, and the downlink power that is associated with receiving data.
Shannon’s theorem identifies the maximum possible rate for a channel with $K$ users:

$$r_{up,k} = B \cdot \log \left(1 + G_{up} \cdot p(tx,k)\right)$$  (12)  
$$r_{dl,k} = B \cdot \log \left(1 + G_{dl} \cdot p(tx,RRHce)\right)$$  (13)

In the above, $G_{up}$ and $G_{dl}$ represent the channel gains that are normalized by the noise power in the uplink and downlink, respectively, while $p(tx,k)$ and $p(tx,RRHce)$ are the transmission powers of the user and the serving RRH.

Considering equations (10) and (11), the energy that is expended by a mobile terminal in the uplink and downlink can be computed as follows:

$$E_{up} = k_{tx,1} \cdot t_{up} + k_{tx,2} \cdot t_{up} \cdot p_{tx}$$  (14)  
$$E_{dl} = k_{tx,1} \cdot t_{dl} + k_{tx,2} \cdot t_{dl} \cdot p_{tx}$$  (15)

According to (12), $p_{tx} = \frac{2^{r_{up,k}/G_{up}}-1}{G_{up}}$. Thus, the energy that is consumed by a mobile terminal during offloading can be computed as follows:

$$E_{off} = E_{up} + E_{dl}$$  (16)

Since the energy that is consumed by the mobile terminal in local processing is proportional to the number of processed bits, $E_{loc}$ can be computed as follows:

$$E_{loc} = \epsilon_0 \cdot S$$  (17)

where $\epsilon_0$ is a constant that accounts for both the Joules/cycle and the cycles/bit for the processor at the mobile terminal and $S$ is the number of bits.

For latency, we considered $t_0$ and $t_1$ as the times that are needed to process one bit at the mobile terminal and at the serving RRH, respectively. The time that is required for the offloading process to be completed is equal to the sum of the following elements: the time that is required for sending the bits from the mobile terminal to the serving RRH via the uplink; the time for the remote processor to execute the offloaded computation; and the time for sending all the output bits via the downlink. Thus, the expressions for the latency for the local processing and offloading are as follows:

$$L_{loc} = t_0 \cdot S$$  (18)  
$$L_{off} = t_{up} + t_1 \cdot S + t_{dl}$$  (19)

### C. OFFLOADING ALGORITHM

The main objective of this algorithm is to determine whether an application should be processed locally or must be offloaded to the Edge Cloud-RRH. The objective of the decision is to enhance the user’s quality of experience (QoE) while optimizing the use of resources in both the network and at the mobile terminal.

To facilitate the decision-making, we introduce a set of parameters to be utilized without increasing the solution’s complexity to the formulated optimization problem. The algorithm, which is illustrated in Figure 8, is applied at each time slot to process the set of tasks that are generated by the launched applications.

The algorithm starts by examining channel conditions. Computing the channel capacity using Shannon’s theorem (as described above), the channel coefficient is compared to the average channel coefficient, which is calculated and updated over time. If the current channel realization exceeds
the computed average, the channel is considered to be in a relatively “good” state and the task can be offloaded. Otherwise, the MT will try to process the application locally. However, mobile terminal resources are limited in terms of computational capacity and latency generated by local execution should not exceed the maximum latency. Accordingly, if the required computational capacity exceeds the predefined percentage of the total locally available capacity or latency condition is not verified, the task execution is failed. Otherwise, the task is executed locally at the MT.

Next, latencies are compared using equations (18) and (19). If the minimum between latency that is generated when the task is offloaded to the Edge Cloud-RRH and that generated by local execution is higher than the maximum latency authorized by the application, the task execution is failed. Otherwise, the task is executed locally at the MT.

If not, the algorithm decides whether the latency that is generated by offloading is higher. If so, it verifies that the MT has the necessary resources to execute the task before deciding to execute it locally. Otherwise, the task is offloaded to Edge Cloud-RRH.

D. SCHEDULING OPTIMIZATION STRATEGY

The second strategy that is proposed in this work is concerned with scheduling while optimizing both the load balance and the execution time. This strategy, which is illustrated in Figure 9, proceeds as follows.

First, the resource monitor collects the information about container resources and sends a report to the load evaluator. This information is used to compute a score for each container, which is used to determine whether a container is overloaded or not. The load on a container can be defined by CPU usage, RAM usage, and network bandwidth utilization. All three resources should be considered uniformly when checking a container load [28], [33]. Otherwise, three cases are possible: CPU overloading, memory overloading, and network overloading.

A container may not be using its network bandwidth or RAM memory at full capacity. However, the number of processes that are running on it may be overloading the CPU, thereby resulting in an average CPU usage that exceeds the number of cores in the machine. This corresponds to the case of CPU overloading.

Similarly, a container may not be using the full capacity of its CPU and memory but may have more connections and congested bandwidth. This corresponds to the case of network overloading.

Finally, memory overloading can be detected via swap activities [29]. By tracking the memory utilization and whether the swapping activities exceed a threshold, memory overloading can be detected.

Assuming uniform consideration of the metrics (CPU, memory and network), a score can be calculated as follows [29]:

$$score = \frac{1}{1 - CPU} \cdot \frac{1}{1 - net} \cdot \frac{1}{1 - mem}$$

where CPU, net, and mem represent the respective utilizations on the container, which are expressed as percentages of maximum capacity. If one resource is highly utilized, the overall volume would be considered as high. By using this approach, the above volume formula can be used to calculate a score for comparison against a threshold for determining whether a container is overloaded or not.

The structure of the containers’ manager that utilizes this score is illustrated in Figure 10, and the algorithm that is used to evaluate the loads is detailed in Algorithm 2.

Algorithm 2 returns to step 1 every 30 seconds to auto-organize Containers list formation until the container resource utilization changes with time. Thus, our approach considers system dynamics.

Finally, the dynamic scheduler uses the best-fit list that is generated by the load evaluator and the execution time to allocate the offloading request to a container. The dynamic allocation algorithm is presented as Algorithm 3.
If all activated containers are overloaded and the best-fit list is empty, a new container is created and the offloading request is assigned to it.

**Algorithm 2 Load Evaluation Algorithm**

| Input: Container load metrics |
| Output: BestFit_list |
| C_list: Containers that are active |
| Container_score: \( \frac{1}{\text{CPU}} * \frac{1}{\text{mem}} * \frac{1}{\text{net}} \) |
| Overload_list: list of containers that are overloaded |
| BestFit_list: list of containers that are suitable for offloading |

**Step1:** For \( i = 1 \) to number_C in C_list do
- calculate Container_score[i];
  - If Container_score[i] > Threshold then
    - add Container[i] to Overload_list;
  - Else
    - add Container[i] to BestFit_list;
- End if
- End for

**Step2:** Sort BestFit_list in increasing order of Container_score
- Sleep (30 sec)
- return to Step1

**Algorithm 3 Containers Dynamic Allocation Algorithm**

| Input: BestFit_list |
| Output: Container allocation |
| If BestFit_list \( \neq 0 \) then |
| For \( i = 1 \) to number_C in BestFit_list do |
| Compute ExecutionTime_Container[i];
| f(Container\(_i\)) \( \leftarrow \) ExecutionTime_Container[i]; |
| End for |

- New_list \( \leftarrow \) Sort containers in ascending order of f(Container\(_i\));
- Affect Offloading_Request to New_list[1];

**Else**
- Wake a new Container;
- Affect Offloading_Request to Container\(_{new}\);
- End if

The average cost of resource utilization of task \( j \) on container \( i \) is computed as follows:

\[
C_{\text{cpu}_i} = \frac{C_{\text{cap}_i}^{\text{cpu}}}{C_{\text{cap}_i}^{\text{net}}} 
\]

\[
C_{\text{ram}_i} = \frac{C_{\text{cap}_i}^{\text{ram}}}{C_{\text{cap}_i}^{\text{net}}} 
\]

\[
C_{\text{net}_i} = \frac{C_{\text{cap}_i}^{\text{net}}}{C_{\text{cap}_i}^{\text{net}}} 
\]

The utilization rate \( \mu_i \) of container \( i \) that corresponds to the system configuration to be computed as follows:

\[
\mu_i = \begin{bmatrix}
\mu_{i,\text{cpu}} &= \frac{\Sigma (t_{i,j} \cdot C_{\text{cpu}_i}^{\text{cpu}})}{C_{\text{cap}_i}^{\text{cpu}}} \\
\mu_{i,\text{ram}} &= \frac{\Sigma (t_{i,j} \cdot C_{\text{ram}_i}^{\text{ram}})}{C_{\text{cap}_i}^{\text{ram}}} \\
\mu_{i,\text{net}} &= \frac{\Sigma (t_{i,j} \cdot C_{\text{net}_i}^{\text{net}})}{C_{\text{cap}_i}^{\text{net}}}
\end{bmatrix} 
\]
The container is overloaded if \(\mu_i^{CPU}, \mu_i^{RAM}, \mu_i^{Net} > 1\). If a task \(j\) is allocated to an overloaded container, we associate a penalty that is positively proportional to the level of the overloading.

The overload cost metric, which is denoted \(\alpha_{ov}\), is defined as follows:

\[
\alpha_{ov} = \begin{cases} 
(\mu_i - 1)^3 & \text{if max}(\mu_i^{CPU}, \mu_i^{RAM}, \mu_i^{Net}) > 1 \\
0 & \text{otherwise}
\end{cases}
\]

(23)

Then, the total overload cost for the Edge Cloud-RRH to execute all tasks can be calculated as follows:

\[
\sum_{i=1}^{N} \alpha_{ov} \cdot \sum_{j} t(i,j)
\]

(24)

where \(N\) is the number of containers.

Migration costs are considered in accounting for user mobility. As a user moves from one cell to another in the network, the user’s task can also be migrated. We associate a penalty \(r_j\) when a MT task \(j\) is migrated from one container to another one to capture the resulting service downtime that is incurred. The total migration cost can be computed as follows:

\[
mig_{cost} = \sum_{i} \sum_{j} t(i,j) \cdot r_j
\]

(25)

Only migrations within the same Edge Cloud-RRH within the same provider are considered. The applied penalty is further dependent on the type of task that is migrated.

We now formulate the proposed strategy. Recall that the objective is to minimize the total task assignment cost while considering both the overload and migration costs in executing all offloading requests. The problem is formulated as follows:

Minimize \(\alpha \sum_{i} \alpha_{ov} + \beta mig_{cost}\)

Subject to

\[
\sum_{i} t(i,j) \cdot T_{ex} \leq D
\]

(27)

\[
\sum_{i} t(i,j) \cdot C_{aw,j}^{CPU} \leq CPU_i
\]

(28)

\[
\sum_{i} t(i,j) \cdot C_{aw,j}^{RAM} \leq RAM_i
\]

(29)

\[
\sum_{i} t(i,j) \cdot C_{aw,j}^{Net} \leq Net_i
\]

(30)

\[
\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i} \mu_i^2 \geq 1
\]

(31)

\[
\sum_{i} t(i,j) = 1
\]

(32)

The objective function in (26) aims at minimizing the total costs, with \(\alpha\) and \(\beta\) used as weights to facilitate the implementation of preference. The objective is constrained by equations (27) through (32). Constraint (27) ensures that each offloading request is executed prior to the application’s deadline, with \(D\) identifying the worst case, namely, the case in which all tasks are sequentially executed. Meanwhile, constraints (28-30) enforce that all tasks’ requirements in terms of CPU, memory and network bandwidth are within the container capabilities. Constraint (31) guarantees load balancing between containers in the same Edge Cloud-RRH. Finally, constraint (32) limits the assignment of each application to a single container. This problem is a MIP and, therefore, can be solved as a linear program since the objective function is linear with respect to all the variables.

V. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

In this section, we describe the evaluation methodology and results for our proposed resource management strategies. We use CloudSim, which is a simulation framework for cloud-based scenarios. The simulator is used in tandem with a 5G HetNet CRAN RHH topology.

Three scenarios are considered, with each evaluating the performance of our strategies toward a single objective: offloading, scheduling, and cost.

A. SCENARIO FOR EVALUATING RRH CLUSTERING STRATEGY

This section provides simulation results for the proposed two-stage RRH clustering scheme. As a first step, the fuzzy logic controller was developed using the fuzzy logic control library [36], [37]. We considered a heterogeneous C-RAN system where H-RRHs have coverage of 500m and a maximum capacity of 24 RBs and L-RRHs are 30m-radius [26]. To evaluate the energy consumed by the network, we used the power values listed in Table 2 [38].

| Parameters | Values |
|------------|--------|
| Coverage of H-RRH | 500m |
| Coverage of L-RRH | 30m |
| \(K\) | 24 RBs |
| \(S\) | 16dB |
| Number of H-RRH | 1000 |
| \(P_{BB}\) | 200W |
| \(P_{cooling}\) | 2000W |
| \(P_{backhaul}\) | 200W |
| \(P_{lighting}\) | 50W |
| \(P_{monitoring}\) | 50W |

Figure 11 shows the considered normalized mean values of the traffic load given by considering loads of all spatially distributed H-RRHs within a 24-hour interval as introduced in [39].

Figure 12 shows the evolution of the average SINR versus the number of L-RRHs per H-RRH. Results show that while without using clustering, the QoS degrades with the increase of the density of RRHs, the proposed clustering scheme is able to improve the QoS with the increasing of L-RRHs density.

We have executed different simulations for different L-RRHs density conditions: sparse, medium, and dense scenarios with 20, 40 and 80 L-RRHs/H-RRH, respectively. We evaluated the network QoS expressed by average SINR.
for different clusters sizes. The results that are highlighted in Figure 13 show that presented scheme is more effective in the dense deployment scenario and bigger cluster size. Therefore, the proposed clustering mechanism can be deployed in high dense 5G C-RANs.

B. SCENARIO FOR EVALUATING THE OFFLOADING STRATEGY

This scenario is used to evaluate our proposed offloading decision algorithm, especially with respect to the total offloading. We consider an urban environment with a heterogeneous CRAN in which each cell is comprised of seven H-RRH units and four L-RRH units. Per [26], the radial coverage is 500 m for an H-RRH unit and 30 m for an L-RRH unit. Other system simulation parameters that are relevant to this scenario are listed in Table 3. The values in the table for $\varepsilon_0$ and $t_0$ have been aligned with the measurements that are specified in [27] for the energy and frequency characteristics of localized computing in commercial handsets and for the computation of data ratios in practical applications.

First, we evaluate the application response time (in ms) while varying the data size (ranging from 1 to 100 kbits). The performance of the proposed scheme is compared to that of total offloading. The results (shown in Figure 16) demonstrate that the proposed offloading scheme improves the user experience by reducing the response time. If the data size is small, the proposed scheme and total offloading perform similarly. However, as the data size increases, the proposed scheme
TABLE 3. Simulation parameters to evaluate offloading strategy.

| Parameter          | Value          |
|--------------------|----------------|
| $k_{tx,1}$         | 0.4W           |
| $k_{tx,2}$         | 18             |
| $k_{rx,1}$         | 0.4W           |
| $k_{rx,2}$         | $2.86 \times 10^3$ W/Mbps |
| $e_0$              | $8.6 \times 10^4$ J/bit |
| $e_1$              | $10^{-7}$ J/site |
| $t_1$              | $t_0/2$        |
| Bandwidth ($B$)    | 10 MHz         |
| Maximum latency authorized by the application ($L_{max}$) | 4s |

FIGURE 16. Application Response Time (in ms), with the Data Size Varied (from 1 to 100 kbits). outperforms total offloading, with an average improvement of 14% in response time.

In Figure 17, we illustrate the results of evaluating the energy that is expended by the mobile terminal while varying the data size (from 1 to 100 kbits). According to the figure, the proposed offloading algorithm results in the mobile terminal expending less energy in our solution compared to the total offloading solution. As with the response time, the proposed scheme’s advantage becomes more apparent as the data size increases. On average, a 15% improvement in energy consumption is observed. Therefore, the proposed algorithm can augment the mobile handset battery lifetime while executing heavy applications.

C. SCENARIO FOR EVALUATING THE SCHEDULING STRATEGY

The proposed scheduling model for this strategy was implemented inside CloudSim as part of the cloud broker. The scenario entailed virtualizing ten datacenters; two to six hosts were created in each datacenter, with 2 GB RAM, 1 TB storage, and 10 GB/s bandwidth in connection. In addition, 50 containers and 100-1000 tasks were implemented under the simulation platform. The task length ranged from 1000 million instructions (MI) to 20000 MI. Other parameters that are relevant to the scenario are listed in Table 4 [30].

TABLE 4. Simulation parameters to evaluate the scheduling strategy.

| Entity             | Parameters         | Value  |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------|
| Datacenter         | Number of datacenters | 10     |        |
|                    | Number of hosts    | 2-6    |        |
|                    | Container Scheduler | Space shared and Time shared |        |
| Container          | Total number of containers | 50     |        |
|                    | MIPS               | 500-2000 |      |
|                    | Memory (RAM)       | 256-2048 |      |
|                    | Bandwidth          | 500-1000 |      |
|                    | Cloudlet Scheduler | Space shared and Time shared |        |
|                    | Number of PEs requirement | 1-4     |        |
| Cloudlet           | Total number of tasks | 100-1000 |      |
|                    | Length of task     | 1000-20000 |     |

In the scenario, we assume that tasks are mutually independent; namely, there is no constraint regarding the sequential processing of the tasks. We also assume that task processing does not undergo preemption, interruption, or migration between processors.

The performance of the proposed task scheduling model is evaluated via comparison with a round-robin (RR) scheduler and ACO [42]. We have implemented these three algorithms in the simulator. Figure 18 plots the average makespans of the three evaluating schedulers. As highlighted in this figure, the proposed scheduler outperforms ACO and RR. Another basis of evaluation for the scheduling is the degree of imbalance, which is denoted as $D_i$, among the containers, and computed as follows:

$$D_i = \frac{T_{max} + T_{min}}{T_{avg}}$$  \hspace{1cm} (33)

In the above equation, $T_{max}$, $T_{min}$, and $T_{avg}$ are the maximum, minimum, and average execution times, respectively, of the containers’ tasks.

Figure 19 plots the average degree of imbalance of each algorithm as a function of the number of tasks, which is varied from 100 to 1000. According to the figure, the proposed task
scheduling model outperforms both RR and ACO algorithms in terms of the system load balance.

D. SCENARIO FOR EVALUATING THE STRATEGY FOR SCHEDULING BASED ON THE OVERLOAD COST

In this scenario, we consider an Edge Cloud-RRH with $N$ heterogeneous containers, where $N = \{25, 50, 75, 100\}$. The computing capacity of the containers is varied between 1 and 10 CPUs, while the memory is varied from 128 Mbytes to 512 Mbytes. The network bandwidth is varied between 100 Kbps to 200 Kbps. The number of tasks $M$ is varied in steps of 20 tasks, namely, $M = \{20, 40, 60, 80, 100, 120, 140\}$. Meanwhile, the task requirements are varied as follows: CPU between 1 to 4; memory between 128 and 1024 Kbytes; and bandwidth between 1 and 20 Kbps. Offloading requests are embedded sequentially, with requirements randomly varied. Simulation parameters that are relevant to this scenario are listed in Table 5. We also fix the values $\alpha = \beta = 0.5$ and $\lambda = 2$.

We compared the proposed cost-based scheduling scheme with the SAH-DB scheduling algorithm [24] (a task
scheduling algorithm that is based on a delay-bound constraint) for 25 to 100 cloud containers. For the proposed scheduler, we used IBM’s linear programming solver CPLEX [31] to generate solutions for the formulated problem and multiple specified data inputs. The scheduling efficiency was evaluated in terms of the execution cost under a varying number of associated tasks. Figure 20 presents the results. The proposed scheduling algorithm can reduce the total execution cost compared with the SAH-DB algorithm for various numbers of associated tasks. Meanwhile, the total scheduling cost decreases with the increase of the number of resources and increases with the number of associated tasks.

VI. CONCLUSION

Cloud radio access networks (CRANs) have recently demonstrated considerable potential in mobile cellular networks, especially in terms of enhancing resource management and asset sharing. Our objective in this work was to introduce novel strategies that homogenize resource management, QoS evaluation, and cost optimization. The work involved three main aspects, which are described below.

First, we proposed a CRAN architecture that is based on a flexible RAN functionality division for 5G networks. We introduced the Edge Cloud RRH, which represents intermediate storage and computation capabilities. In order to enhance radio resource management and reduce energy consumption, we proposed a two-loop RRH clustering mechanism. The first loop used a fuzzy logic controller to decide about L-RRHs clustering. The second loop was dedicated to H-RRHs clustering. The problem was formulated as a bin backing problem and resolved using a heuristic algorithm. Simulation results showed that the proposed scheme is effective for high dense deployments and is able to reduce system energy consumption.

The architecture further entailed a division of functionalities between the central (core) and edge clouds. The objective of this division is to enhance resource utilization while improving network performance. The division makes additional resources available to the user, thereby enabling either total or partial offloading to the Edge Cloud-RRH. Overall, the offloading improves the user experience and enhances the energy efficiency.

Then, we introduced a decision framework for offloading. The framework utilizes an algorithm that considers several key parameters in heterogeneous CRANs to employ our Edge Cloud-RRH for offloading. The algorithm optimizes the use of both network and mobile terminal resources and its efficiency is evaluated via numerical simulation. The simulation results demonstrate that the proposed algorithm reduces the task response time and the energy consumption in the mobile terminal.

Finally, we proposed a novel scheduling scheme for minimizing the computational scheduling cost in Edge Cloud-RRH that considers available resources, connection resource requirements, deadline, and load balancing. The considered scenario involves users offloading tasks to the Edge Cloud-RRH, and we focus on scheduling tasks that request several resources such as CPU, memory, and disk. The scheduling problem is formulated as a cost minimization problem in which user performance in terms of system overload and migration cost is considered. The scheme was evaluated via simulation; the results demonstrate that it can schedule offloading requests with minimal total execution cost.

In future work, we will consider the RRH clustering problem in the heterogeneous Cloud RAN architecture as a two-stage control loop. The first loop will use a fuzzy logic controller to identify the L-RRH clusters, and the second loop will target the H-RRH clusters. The problem will be formulated as a bin backing problem, and a heuristic will be employed to reduce the computational requirements of the solution.

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| TABLE 5. Simulation parameters for the scenario that is used to evaluate the overload cost strategy. |
|---|---|---|
| Entity | Parameter | Value |
| Container | No. of containers | 25 - 100 |
| | CPU | 1 - 10 |
| | Memory (RAM) | 128 - 512 Mbytes |
| Task | Total No. of tasks | 20 - 140 |
| | CPU | 1 - 4 |
| | Memory (RAM) | 128 - 1024 Kbytes |
| | Network Bandwidth | 1 - 20 Kbps |
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