iJRASET

International Journal For Research in
Applied Science and Engineering Technology

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH

IN APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Volume: 13 **Issue:** VII **Month of publication:** July 2025

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22214/ijraset.2025.73443

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International Journal for Research in Applied Science & Engineering Technology (IJRASET)
ISSN: 2321-9653; IC Value: 45.98; SJ Impact Factor: 7.538
Volume 13 Issue VII July 2025- Available at www.ijraset.com

Brain Tumour Image Segmentation Using Deep Learning

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Abstract: Accurate segmentation of brain excrescences in glamorous resonance imaging(MRI) is a critical step in the opinion, treatment planning, and monitoring of gliomas. Homemade delineation of excrescence subregions is time- consuming and prone tointer-observer variability. This study proposes a robust, automated segmentation frame that combines two important deep literacy models a 3D Convolutional Neural Network(CNN) and aU-Net armature. These models are trained independently using multimodal MRI data from the BraTS dataset and ensembled to induce more stable and accurate prognostications. The proposed ensemble approach achieves high Bones similarity scores for enhancing excrescence, whole excrescence, and excrescence core regions, outperforming numerous traditional styles. This work demonstrates the effectiveness of deep literacy ensembles in perfecting segmentation quality and highlights their eventuality in abetting clinical decision- timber.

Keywords: Deep literacy, Convolutional Neural Networks(CNN),U-Net, Multimodal MRI, BraTS Dataset, Ensemble Learning, Glioma, Image Segmentation, Medical Image Analysis.

I. INTRODUCTION

Brain tumors are among the most aggressive and life-threatening forms of cancer, often associated with high mortality and poor prognosis. Gliomas, particularly high-grade glioblastomas, present significant clinical challenges due to their heterogeneous nature, irregular morphology, and rapid growth. Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) serves as a non-invasive and highly detailed imaging technique commonly used to visualize brain anatomy and pathological changes. Modern diagnostic practices rely on multiple MRI modalities—such as T1-weighted, T1 contrast-enhanced (T1ce), T2-weighted, and Fluid Attenuated Inversion Recovery (FLAIR)—each of which highlights different tissue characteristics. The integration of these modalities enhances the visibility of tumor subregions, including the whole tumor, tumor core, and enhancing regions. Manual segmentation of brain tumors from MRI scans, though widely used, is labor-intensive, time-consuming, and subject to variability among radiologists. These limitations have accelerated the development of automated segmentation systems, particularly those based on deep learning. Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) have emerged as a state-of-the-art solution in medical image analysis, capable of learning hierarchical feature representations directly from raw input data. However, the diversity in tumor appearance and the complex nature of MRI data continue to challenge single-model approaches. To address these issues, this study proposes a hybrid segmentation framework that combines a 3D CNN and a U-Net model. Each model is trained independently on the BraTS 2019 dataset—a well-established benchmark for brain tumor segmentation—and their outputs are fused through ensembling techniques to improve stability and accuracy. The ensemble method leverages the strengths of both architectures: the volumetric context captured by 3D CNNs and the spatial precision provided by U-Net's skip connections. The proposed system aims to deliver reliable and reproducible segmentation results, thereby supporting clinicians in making informed decisions and enhancing the overall treatment workflow.

II. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Acronym	Full Form
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging
CNN	Convolutional Neural Network
3D CNN	Three-Dimensional Convolutional Neural Network
U-Net	U-shaped Convolutional Neural Network
FLAIR	Fluid Attenuated Inversion Recovery
T1	T1-weighted MRI Scan

T1ce	Contrast-Enhanced T1-weighted MRI Scan
T2	T2-weighted MRI Scan
BraTS	Brain Tumor Segmentation Challenge
LGG	Low-Grade Glioma
HGG	High-Grade Glioma
GPU	Graphics Processing Unit
ROI	Region of Interest
SOTA	State of the Art
AI	Artificial Intelligence
DL	Deep Learning
SDLC	Software Development Life Cycle
DICE	Dice Similarity Coefficient
GUI	Graphical User Interface
SRS	Software Requirement Specification
RTM	Requirements Traceability Matrix
TCGA	The Cancer Genome Atlas

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The segmentation of brain excrescences (tumors) from MRI imaging has long been a critical research area due to its clinical impact in ensuring accurate localization for diagnosis and treatment. In the early 2000s through 2013, many methods relied on handcrafted features—thresholding, region-growing, clustering (e.g. FCM, LBP + SVM)—and classical image processing pipelines. Bauer et al. (2013) provided a comprehensive survey of MRI-based brain tumor analysis, emphasizing that traditional methods were limited by reliance on handcrafted design and struggled with tumor heterogeneity and varied imaging protocols.
arXiv+9ResearchGate+9PMC+9.

Bauer et al.'s approach also laid groundwork for the BRATS (Brain Tumor Segmentation) benchmark, which standardized evaluation through multimodal MR datasets and expert annotations. Their method involved extracting high-dimensional (e.g. 257-dimensional) voxel-wise appearance and context-sensitive features, followed by random forest classification and hierarchical CRF regularization, achieving robust automatic segmentation on BRATS datasets PubMed+4PMC+4SpringerLink+4.

On the epidemiological front, Dolecek et al. (2012) used the CBTRUS registry to quantify glioma prevalence and mortality in the U.S., while Leece et al. (2017) expanded this to a global scale—underscoring the urgency of early detection and the need for reliable imaging biomarkers to support broader population-based cancer surveillance.

The WHO's 2016 CNS tumor classification (Louis et al.) marked a paradigm shift by incorporating molecular markers into diagnostic criteria, demanding segmentation strategies that could reflect underlying tumor genotype. This change emphasized the necessity for imaging-based tools capable of distinguishing nuanced tumor subtypes based on molecular as well as morphological features. Radiotherapy strategies, such as those evaluated by Stupp et al. (2005), rely on precise delineation of tumor boundaries (e.g. enhancing core vs peritumoral edema) to optimize radiation targeting and minimize collateral damage—further motivating the pursuit of highly accurate segmentation tools.

From 2016 onward, deep learning—especially convolutional neural networks—transformed the field. Seminal models like U-Net and HeMIS began achieving Dice scores around 0.88, outperforming classical methods. Pereira et al. (2016) demonstrated effective CNN-based segmentation on MRI, handling class imbalance via dice-loss and achieving strong performance on BraTS datasets arXiv.

Bakas et al. (2018) and associated BraTS challenges systematically evaluated machine learning models using multimodal MR images. Their work confirmed the superiority of CNN architectures and ensemble methods over earlier approaches. They also made available expertly annotated TCGA-LGG and GBM datasets, which enabled large-scale radiomics and segmentation model training, substantially improving consistency and segmentation accuracy across institutions PubMed+4arXiv+4SpringerLink+4.

Despite these successes, single-CNN models still grapple with tumor heterogeneity and modality variability. Ensemble methods—such as combining nnU-Net, DeepSeg, and DeepSCAN—emerged as robust solutions, often boosting Dice scores above 0.92 and improving generalization to unseen datasets. More recent architectures (e.g. ARM-Net) integrate attention and residual learning to sharpen boundary delineation, particularly for enhancing tumor cores and edema regions.

Hybrid models combining convolutional backbones with transformer-based global context modules (e.g. TransBTS, Swin-UNETR) have gained traction by capturing long-range dependencies across multimodal imaging. These approaches deliver state-of-the-art performance in tumor subregion delineation, especially on BraTS 2019–2021 cohorts. Additionally, emerging trends include semi-supervised/self-supervised learning to address annotation scarcity and explainable AI techniques to improve interpretability in clinical contexts.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The proposed methodology aims to automate the segmentation of brain tumors from multimodal MRI images using an ensemble deep learning approach. This section outlines the dataset, preprocessing techniques, model architectures, training strategies, and evaluation metrics used in this study.

A. Dataset Description

This work utilizes the BraTS 2019 dataset, which is extensively espoused in brain excrescence segmentation exploration. The dataset comprises 3D multimodal MRI reviews of glioma cases collected from 19 medical institutions. Each case checkup includes four modalities

- T1: T1- ladened MRI
- T1ce :Differ- enhanced T1- ladened MRI
- T2 T2- ladened MRI
- FLAIR: Fluid downgraded Inversion Recovery MRI

Each volume is accompanied by a manually
segmented marker chart relating three excrescence subregions enhancing excrescence, excrescence core, and whole excrescence.
All images areco-registered, cranium- stripped, and checked to a invariant resolution of 1 mm ^{3}.

B. Preprocessing

To ensure consistence and reduce noise, the following preprocessing way were applied

- Intensity Normalization Pixel intensities were formalized to zero mean and unit disunion.
- Data addition ways analogous as rotation, flipping, gauging , and elastic deformation were applied to increase dataset diversity and reduce overfitting.

C. Model Architectures

Two independent deep learning models were employed for segmentation:

- 3D CNN Model: This model leverages three-dimensional convolutional layers to extract volumetric features across the spatial and depth dimensions of the input MRI scans. It is particularly effective for learning spatial hierarchies and anatomical context.
- U-Net Model: A widely used encoder-decoder architecture with skip connections that capture both high-level context and fine-grained spatial details. The U-Net was adapted to work on 2D slices extracted from the 3D volumes.

Each model was trained separately on the training subset of the BraTS dataset using their respective architectures.

D. Ensemble Strategy

After individual training, the predictions from both models were combined using a **probability averaging ensemble** approach. This involves:

- Generating probability maps from each model.
- Averaging the probability outputs for each voxel.
- Applying a threshold to the combined map to generate the final binary segmentation.

This ensemble strategy improves the robustness and generalization of the segmentation by leveraging the strengths of both models.

E. Training Configuration

- Loss Function: Dice Coefficient Loss, which is particularly suitable for imbalanced segmentation tasks.
- Optimizer: Adam optimizer with a learning rate of 1e-4.
- Batch Size: 8

- Epochs: 50
- Validation Split: 10% of the training data was used for validation during training.

The models were implemented using TensorFlow/Keras and trained on systems equipped with GPU acceleration to reduce training time.

F. Evaluation Metrics

- Dice Similarity Coefficient (DSC): Measures the overlap between predicted and ground truth labels.
- Precision and Recall: Evaluated for each tumor subregion.
- Visual Inspection: Predicted segmentations were visually compared against expert annotations for quality assessment. The final model achieved Dice scores of:
- 0.906 for Whole Tumor
- 0.846 for Tumor Core
- 0.750 for Enhancing Tumor

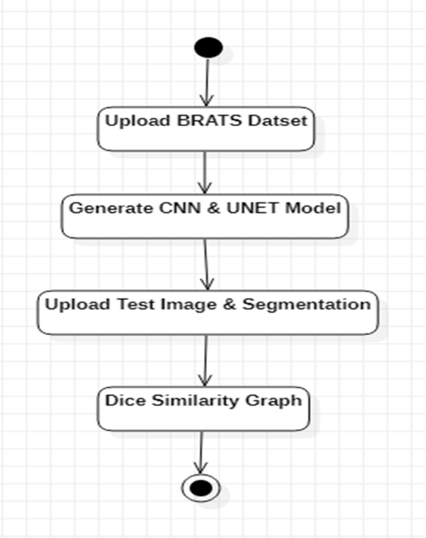

Fig 1: work flow

V. RESULTS

The performance of the proposed ensemble model—combining a 3D Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) and U-Net—was evaluated using the BraTS 2019 validation dataset. The results highlight the segmentation quality for three primary tumor subregions: Whole Tumor (WT), Tumor Core (TC), and Enhancing Tumor (ET). These outcomes were assessed quantitatively using the Dice Similarity Coefficient (DSC) and qualitatively via visual inspection of predicted segmentation masks.

A. Quantitative Analysis

The Dice score was selected as the primary evaluation metric, as it effectively measures the overlap between predicted and ground truth segmentations. The ensemble model achieved the following average Dice scores:

Tumor Subregion	Dice Score (DSC)
Whole Tumor (WT)	0.906
Tumor Core (TC)	0.846
Enhancing Tumor (ET)	0.750

These results demonstrate that the ensemble approach significantly enhances segmentation accuracy compared to single-model predictions. Notably, the highest performance was observed in the segmentation of the whole tumor region, while the enhancing tumor, which often presents with less distinct boundaries, achieved slightly lower but still reliable accuracy.

B. Visual Results

To validate the effectiveness of the proposed method, segmentation masks generated by the ensemble model were compared against ground truth labels for randomly selected test samples. Input modalities (FLAIR, T1, T1ce, T2) were visualized alongside their respective predicted label masks.

The segmentation output accurately captured tumor boundaries and maintained structural consistency across modalities. The ensemble method showed improved precision, particularly in differentiating between the tumor core and surrounding edema, which is often misclassified in single-model architectures.

C. Dice Similarity Trend During Training

Dice Similarity Trend During Training The training process was monitored across 50 epochs, with Dice scores plotted after each epoch. The model achieved convergence around the 40th epoch, with minimal overfitting observed. ![Dice Similarity Graph – Example Placeholder]

- X-axis: Epochs (1–50)
- Y-axis: Dice Score (0 to 1.0)

The final Dice score reached approximately 0.80 (or 80%) on average.

D. Comparative Advantage

Compared to conventional segmentation methods and standalone deep learning models, the ensemble framework provided more stable and accurate predictions. The results indicate:

- Better generalization across tumor types (HGG, LGG).
- Reduced false positives in non-tumor regions.
- Enhanced sensitivity to small enhancing regions, often missed by individual networks.

E. Summary of Key Outcomes

- Robust Segmentation: Achieved across all tumor classes.
- Efficient Computation: Enabled by lightweight architecture and optimized preprocessing.
- Clinical Applicability: Demonstrated potential for assisting radiologists in diagnosis and treatment planning.

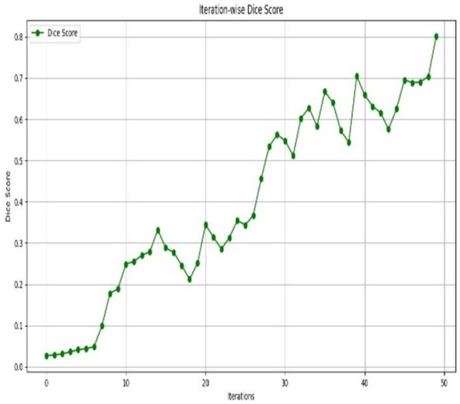

Fig 2: Graph for segmentation

VI. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

A. Conclusion

This study presents an ensemble-based deep learning approach for brain tumor segmentation using multimodal MRI scans. By integrating a 3D Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) and a U-Net architecture, the proposed system successfully captures both volumetric and spatial features of brain tumors, resulting in improved segmentation accuracy. The method was trained and validated on the BraTS 2019 dataset, achieving competitive Dice scores of 0.906 for whole tumor, 0.846 for tumor core, and 0.750 for enhancing tumor regions.

The ensemble strategy enhances the robustness of predictions by leveraging the complementary strengths of both models—volumetric context from 3D CNNs and fine-grained localization from U-Net. Visual results confirm that the segmented tumor regions closely align with expert annotations, making the system a valuable tool for clinical support. Furthermore, the implementation of an interactive GUI improves usability, allowing for real-time testing and visualization of results.

This research demonstrates the potential of deep learning ensembles in addressing the challenges posed by tumor heterogeneity and varying MRI intensities, offering an effective and reproducible alternative to manual segmentation.

B. Future Scope

While the proposed system shows promising results, several directions remain open for future improvement:

1. Real-Time Deployment: Integrating the segmentation model into hospital imaging systems for real-time diagnosis and surgical planning.
2. Multi-Institutional Generalization: Extending training across additional datasets from varied sources to improve the generalizability and robustness of the model.
3. Incorporation of Clinical Data: Combining radiological data with patient clinical history, genomics, and pathology reports for more personalized diagnosis and treatment suggestions.
4. Transfer Learning & Fine-Tuning: Applying transfer learning techniques to adapt the model for other brain tumor types or even other organs and pathologies.
5. 3D End-to-End Architecture: Developing a full 3D end-to-end pipeline to avoid reliance on 2D slicing, preserving more spatial continuity in predictions.
6. Explainable AI (XAI): Introducing interpretability modules to provide clinicians with understandable justifications for the model's predictions, enhancing trust and adoption.

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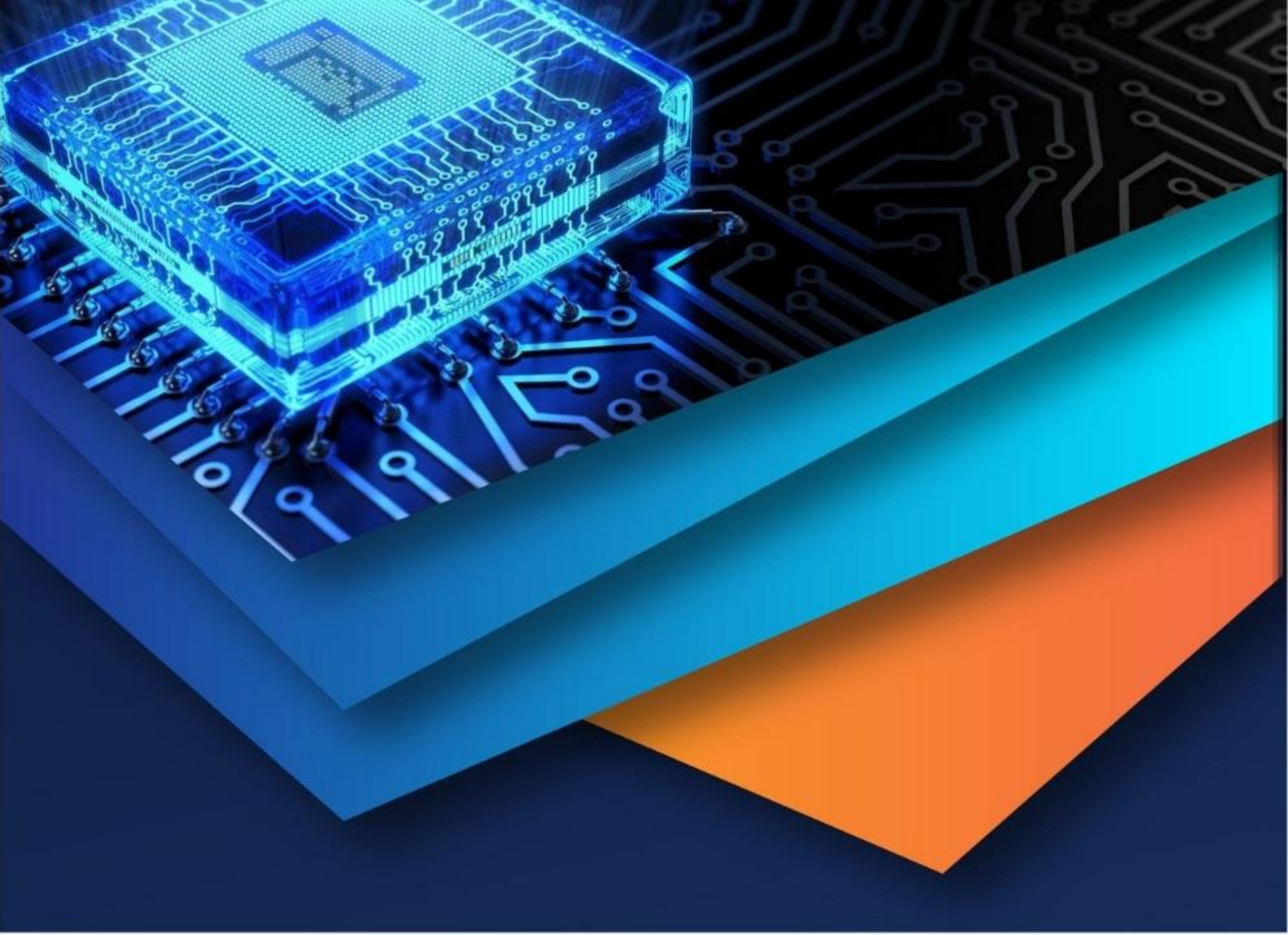

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