

Guest Editorial

Special Issue on Emerging Computational Intelligence Techniques to address Challenges in Biomedical Data and Imaging

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COMPUTATIONAL intelligence, particularly deep neural networks, plays a key role in the recent bloom of data-driven automation, which can be viewed as one of the most emerging fields of artificial intelligence over the last decade. It has achieved great success in different tasks in computer vision, image processing, biomedical analysis and related fields. Researchers in deep and shallow machine learning including those working in the above fields can play a significant role in understanding and processing of complex medical data in order to improve the care of patients. Healthcare and biomedical sciences have become data-intensive fields, with a strong need for sophisticated data mining methods to extract the knowledge from the available information. The analysis of biomedical data still entails many challenges including high dimensionality, class imbalance and low numbers of samples. Although the current research in this field has shown promising results, several research issues remain to be explored. There is a need to explore novel feature selection methods to improve predictive performance along with interpretation, and address the scalability to large scale data in biomedical sciences.

This special issue intends to prompt emerging computational intelligence (CI) techniques for biomedical data and imaging. Special attention devoted to handling feature selection, class imbalance, bias, uncertainty modeling and data fusion in medical imaging. This is of special interest for medical experts who have access to interesting sources of data but lack expertise in using computational intelligence techniques effectively. To achieve the goal of this special

issue, the guest editors have comprehensively evaluated the originality, technical novelties, presentation quality and relevance of all the submitted papers. Through a rigorous and careful review process, four high-quality papers have been selected for publication. Overall, these four papers provide emerging computational intelligence techniques for biomedical data and imaging. A brief summary of each paper is introduced below.

Conventional clustering techniques for neuroimaging applications usually focus on capturing differences between given subjects, while neglecting arising differences between features and the potential bias caused by degraded data quality. The paper entitled "ADCoC: Adaptive Distribution Modeling Based Collaborative Clustering for Disentangling Disease Heterogeneity from Neuroimaging Data" by Liu et al. exploits the underlying heterogeneous clusters of features to serve as weak supervision for improved clustering of subjects, which is achieved by simultaneously clustering subjects and features via non-negative matrix trifactorization. In order to suppress noise, an adaptive regularization based on coefficient distribution modeling is introduced. The proposed approach is expected to be more effective and robust against noise. The proposed method is compared with the baseline techniques and recently published methods demonstrating superior clustering performance on synthetic data with known ground truth labels. Furthermore, the proposed technique is applied to magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) data from a cohort of patients with Parkinson's disease.

The computer-aided diagnosis of focal liver lesions (FLLs) can help improve workflow and enable correct diagnoses; FLL detection is the first step in such a computer-aided diagnosis. By introducing an attention-guided multiphase alignment in feature space, the paper entitled "Robust End-to-End Focal Liver Lesion Detection Using Unregistered Multiphase Computed Tomography Images" by Lee et al. presents a fully automated, end-to-end learning framework for detecting FLLs from multiphase computed tomography (CT) images. The proposed method is robust to misaligned multiphase images owing to its complete

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learning-based approach, which reduces the sensitivity of the model's performance to the quality of registration and enables a standalone deployment of the model in clinical practice. Evaluation on a large-scale dataset with 280 patients confirmed that the proposed approach outperformed previous state-of-the-art methods and significantly reduced the performance degradation for detecting FLLs using misaligned multiphase CT images.

Distant metastasis (DM) is the leading cause of death in advanced lung cancer, which is diagnosed by positron emission tomography (PET) scanning. However, most existing methods only analyze tumor regions to extract local features for DM prediction, which neglects the rich whole-lung information. To alleviate this problem, the paper entitled "A Novel Deep Learning Framework Based Mask-Guided Attention Mechanism for Distant Metastasis Prediction of Lung Cancer" by Li et al. proposed a novel deep learning framework based mask-guided attention mechanism called Mask-Guided Two-stream Attention network (MGTA) for DM prediction, including a 3D pseudo-siamese feature pyramid network (PSFPN) to learn both global features in the whole lung and local features in tumor; and a deep cascaded attention module (DCAM) for further feature fusion. The proposed deep cascade attention module can effectively leverage the complementary multi-level features in PSFPN to enhance the feature recognition capacity of small tumors. Extensive experiments on a large-scale DM dataset including 2814 lung cancer patients show that the MGTA outperforms state-of-the-art lung cancer diagnosis methods and the commonly used tumor-based methods. Furthermore, the MGTA shows large improvement especially when the training data size is small.

Vein contraction and venous compression typically caused by low temperature and excessive placement pressure can blur the captured finger vein images and severely impair the quality of extracted features. To improve the quality of captured finger vein image, the paper entitled "Finger Vein Image Deblurring Using Neighbors-Based Binary-GAN (NB-GAN)" by He et al. proposed a 26-layer generator network constrained by Neighbors-based Binary Patterns (NBP) texture loss to recover the clear image (guessing the original clear image). NBP texture loss is used for training the generator to enhance the deblurring ability of the network on images. Theoretical analysis and simulation results show that the proposed neighbors-based binary-GAN (NB-GAN) can achieve better deblurring performance than the the-state-of-the-art approaches.



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