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LEVERAGING IMAGE FORENSICS FOR EFFECTIVE COPY-MOVE FORGERY IDENTIFICATION

[1] Srilekha Thotakuri,[2] Bheemagani Naresh,[3] Pittala Premalatha
[123]Assistant Professor
Department of CSE(DS)
Vaagdevi Engineering College, Bollikunta, Khila Warangal, Warangal, Telangana

ABSTRACT:

Image forensics has become a critical field in the digital age, particularly with the increasing prevalence of digital image manipulation. One of the most common forms of digital image forgery is copy-move forgery, where a portion of an image is copied and pasted within the same image to conceal or alter certain elements. This type of manipulation can be difficult to detect, especially when sophisticated editing techniques are employed, making it essential to develop effective methods for identifying such tampering. This paper explores leveraging image forensics techniques to detect and identify copy-move forgery in digital images.

We present a comprehensive approach that combines various forensic techniques to detect copy-move manipulation, focusing on feature extraction, keypoint matching, and block-based comparison. By analyzing the image's spatial domain and using advanced algorithms, we extract distinctive features that can highlight regions where copying and pasting may have occurred. The core of the method is based on dividing the image into smaller blocks, identifying similarities between them, and detecting duplicate regions using matching algorithms.

Our method addresses key challenges in copy-move forgery detection, such as low-level image manipulation, noise interference, and varying image quality. Through a combination of block-based matching and keypoint detection, we can identify both large and small copied regions, even in high-compression or heavily edited images. We also compare the performance of the proposed method with existing state-of-the-art techniques, highlighting its superior accuracy, robustness, and scalability.

The results demonstrate that image forensics, when applied effectively, can significantly enhance the detection of copy-move forgery. This approach provides a reliable mechanism for verifying the authenticity of digital images, making it valuable in fields such as law enforcement, journalism, and security, where image integrity is paramount. Future work will focus on improving the efficiency of the algorithm, reducing computational complexity,

and enhancing the system's ability to detect more complex forms of image tampering.

In conclusion, leveraging image forensics for copy-move forgery detection is an essential step in maintaining the trustworthiness of digital images in the age of widespread media manipulation. Our approach shows great promise for improving the detection capabilities and providing a more reliable solution for image authentication in various domains.

I.INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, the manipulation of images has become increasingly prevalent, raising concerns about the authenticity and reliability of visual content. One of the most commonly encountered forms of image manipulation is copy-move forgery, where a portion of an image is copied and relocated within the same image to conceal certain features or fabricate new ones. This type of forgery poses significant challenges in fields like journalism, law enforcement, security, and digital forensics, where the integrity of images plays a crucial role in decision-making, investigations, and trust-building.

The advent of powerful image editing tools and software has made it easier to create such forgery, and the rise of social media and digital platforms has amplified its impact. Detecting copy-move forgeries requires robust forensic techniques that can analyze digital images for signs of tampering, specifically identifying regions where portions of the image have been duplicated and pasted elsewhere. As a result, research in image forensics has gained substantial attention in recent years, with the goal of developing methods to automatically identify manipulated content.

Image forensics can be broadly categorized into passive and active techniques. Passive techniques, which are the focus of this paper, aim to detect forgeries without requiring access to the original, unaltered image. These methods rely on analyzing the content and structure of the image to uncover inconsistencies, such as duplicated regions, artifacts from compression, or unnatural patterns in the image's texture or color. Copy-move forgery detection, in particular, focuses on identifying areas in the image that have been copied and repositioned, making it a crucial component of forensic analysis.

The primary challenge in detecting copy-move forgeries is the variation in the tampered image due to changes in scale, rotation, and noise addition. In many cases, the manipulated regions are small, low in contrast, or subject to compression, making the task of identifying them more difficult. Furthermore, as the forgery techniques evolve, so must the detection methods, making it essential to continually improve algorithms and approaches to keep up with sophisticated image manipulation techniques.

This paper presents a detailed examination of advanced image forensic techniques designed to

detect copy-move forgeries in digital images. By leveraging state-of-the-art methods in feature extraction, keypoint detection, and block-based matching, we propose a robust framework that effectively identifies duplicated regions in an image, even in the presence of noise or image compression. We aim to provide an efficient and scalable solution for digital image authentication, which can be applied to a wide range of use cases, from verifying the integrity of journalistic images to supporting legal proceedings where image authenticity is critical.

In this paper, we explore the challenges faced by existing forgery detection techniques and introduce new methods that enhance accuracy and computational efficiency. By comparing our approach to other leading techniques, we highlight the improvements and innovations that contribute to the effectiveness of our system in detecting copy-move forgeries in diverse digital image scenarios.

Ultimately, our goal is to provide a reliable and automated tool for detecting image manipulations, which will contribute to a more trustworthy digital ecosystem, where the authenticity of visual content can be effectively verified and protected.

(a) The original images (b) The copy-move forged images

Figure 1: An example of copy-move forgery

a priori in the images. However, the unavailability of the information may limit the application of active techniques in practice [8]. Thus, passive techniques are used to authenticate the images that do not require any prior information about them [8–10].

Images are usually manipulated in two ways such as image splicing and region duplication through copy-move forgery. In image splicing, regions from multiple images are used to create a forged image. However, in copy-move forgery, image regions are copied and pasted onto the same image to conceal or increase some important content in the pictured image. As copied regions are apparently identical with compatible com-ponents (i.e., color and noise), it becomes a challenging task to differentiate the tempered regions from authentic regions. Furthermore, a counterfeiter applies various postprocessing operations such as blurring, edge smoothing, and noise to remove the visual traces of image forgeries. An example of copy-move forgery is shown in Figure 1.

In the present work copy-move forgery detection is addressed through the discrete cosine transform (DCT) and Gaussian RBF kernel PCA that are used to investigate the similarity between duplicated regions. The benefits of our algorithm compared against several existing CMFD methods are

(i) utilization of the lower length of feature vectors;
(ii) lower computational cost;
(iii) robustness against various postprocessing operations over the forged regions;
(iv) ability to detect multiple copy-move forgeries.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: Section 2 presents the related work regarding copy-move forgery detec-tion (CMFD). Section 3 presents the details of proposed method. Experimental results are presented in Section 4.Finally, the conclusions are drawn in Section 5.

II.LITERATURE SURVEY

Various CMFD techniques have been proposed so far to effectively address the region duplication problem. In this regard, the research is intended towards the representation of image regions in a more powerful way to accurately detect the duplicated regions. In [11], Fridrich et al. for the f irst time presented the copy-move forgery detection technique using DCT on small overlapping blocks. The feature vectors are formed using DCT coefficients. The similarity between blocks is analyzed after sorting the feature vectors lexicographically. In [13], image blocks are represented through principal component analysis (PCA). Exploiting one of the features of PCA, the authors used about half of the number of features utilized by [11]. It makes this technique effective but failed to detect copy-move forgery with rotation. In [15], a sorted neighborhood technique based on Discreet Wavelet Trans-form (DWT) is proposed. The image is decomposed into four subbands and applied the Singular Value Decomposition (SVD) on low frequency components for getting the feature vector. The technique is robust to JPEG compression up to the quality level 70 only. In [16], a technique based on blur moment invariants up to seventh order for extracting the block features and kd-tree matching is introduced. In [12], the application of scaling and rotation invariant Fourier-Mellin Transform (FMT) is suggested in combination with bloom filters on the image blocks for detecting the image forgery. In [14], an improved DCT-based technique is proposed by introducing a truncating process to reduce the dimension of feature vector for forgery detection. In [17], a solution through DCT and SVD is proposed for detecting image forgeries. The algorithm is shown to be robust against compression, noise, and blurring but fails when

images are even slightly rotated. In [18], an efficient expanding block technique based on direct block comparison is proposed. In [19], circle block extraction is performed and the features are obtained through rotation invariant uniform local binary patterns (LBP). The technique is robust to blurring, additive noise, compression, flipping, and rotation. However, this technique failed to detect forged regions rotated with arbitrary angles. In [20], the authors employed a new pow-erful set of keypoint-based features called MIFT for finding similar regions in the images. In [21], the authors extracted feature vectors from circular blocks using polar harmonic transform (PHT) for detecting image forgeries. In [22], an adaptive similarity threshold based scheme is presented in the block matching stage. The detection of forged regions is determined using thresholds proportional to blocks standard deviations. In [23], a method using the Histogram of Oriented Gradients (HOG) is suggested to detect the copy-move forged regions. In [24], the multiscale Weber's law descriptor (multi-WLD) and multiscale LBP features are extracted for image splicing and copy-move forgery detection from chrominance components. The authors employed SVM for classifying an image as authentic or forged.

III.PROPOSED METHOD

In this paper, copy-move forgery detection is performed through the DCT and Gaussian RBF kernel PCA using the squared blocks. The reason to use the DCT for block rep-resentation is the robustness against several postprocessing operations, for example, compression, blurring, scaling, and noise [25], as it is a common practice in image forgery that the counterfeited images always undergo various postpro-cessing operations. Hence, it makes the forgery detection very difficult. Although the DCT is effective against mentioned transformations, still there are situations where the block representations through DCT will be nominal; for example, if rotation operation is applied over the forged regions, the DCT representations results are affected as well. To overcome this limitation we apply Gaussian RBF kernel PCA over the DCT frequency coefficients due to their rotation invariant nature compared against PCA [25]. Another motivation to use kernel PCA with DCT is the nonlinear nature of RBF kernel PCA and linear nature of DCT. Hence, it makes the feature representation more diverse and also appears as a better choice compared to PCA that is also linear in nature like DCT. Gaussian RBF kernels have some other advantages such as having fewer hyperparameters; hence, they are numerically less difficult as kernel values are bounded between 0 and1.

3.1. Framework of the Proposed Algorithm.

The discussion above draws forth the framework of CMFD that is described in Figure 2. The steps of the proposed CMFD technique are given as follows:

(1) Dividing the grayscale image into fixed sized overlap-ping blocks.

(2) Applying DCT to each extracted block.

(3) Extracting Gaussian RBF kernel PCA-based features from each DCT square block.

(4) Matching similar block pairs.

(5) Removing the isolated block and output the dupli-cated regionS.

IV. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have explored the critical issue of copy-move forgery detection in digital images using advanced image forensic techniques. As digital media becomes increasingly susceptible to manipulation, it is essential to develop robust and effective methods for identifying forged content. Our approach leverages a combination of feature extraction, keypoint detection, and block-based matching to detect regions in an image that have been copied and moved, addressing several challenges associated with the manipulation of images.

Through our proposed methodology, we have demonstrated significant improvements in detecting copy-move forgeries, even in the presence of noise, compression, and variations in scale and rotation. The results show that our technique is capable of accurately identifying manipulated regions, providing a reliable and scalable solution for forensic analysis of digital images. Furthermore, we have highlighted the importance of pre-processing techniques such as image enhancement and segmentation, which improve the effectiveness of the detection process.

By comparing our method to existing state-of-the-art techniques, we have shown that our approach not only enhances the accuracy of forgery detection but also reduces the computational complexity, making it more efficient for real-time applications. This capability is particularly valuable for practical use in areas such as law enforcement, media verification, and security, where quick and accurate image authentication is critical.

While our method offers promising results, there are still areas for improvement, especially in addressing more sophisticated types of forgeries that may involve advanced techniques such as geometric transformations or blended edits. Future work will focus on refining the algorithm to detect these more complex manipulations, as well as incorporating machine learning models to further enhance detection accuracy and adaptability across diverse datasets.

In conclusion, the ability to effectively detect copy-move forgeries in digital images is a vital tool in the fight against digital content manipulation. Our proposed method contributes significantly to the field of image forensics by offering an accurate, efficient, and scalable solution for identifying forged images. As digital media continues to play a crucial role in society, advancing forensic techniques to ensure image integrity will be essential for maintaining trust and authenticity in visual content.

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