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Performance Comparison of Microstrip Antennas with Diverse Substrates at Multiple Frequencies

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ABSTRACT: Microstrip antennas are widely used in modern communication systems due to their compact size, low cost, and ease of integration with printed circuit boards. This paper presents a detailed performance comparison of microstrip antennas utilizing various substrate materials across multiple frequency ranges. The study investigates the impact of different substrate materials—such as FR4, Rogers RT/Duroid, and Teflon—on key performance metrics including return loss, bandwidth, gain, and radiation pattern. The antennas are designed and simulated using a range of frequencies to evaluate their performance under different conditions. The results reveal significant variations in antenna characteristics based on substrate material and frequency, providing insights into the trade-offs between material properties and antenna performance. By analyzing these variations, the study aims to guide the selection of appropriate substrate materials for specific applications and frequency ranges. The findings offer valuable information for optimizing microstrip antenna designs to meet the requirements of various communication systems, from wireless networks to satellite communications.

KEYWORDS: FR4, DUROID-6006, HFSS, patch.

I. INTRODUCTION

Microstrip antennas, also known as patch antennas, are an integral component in modern wireless communication systems due to their compact size, lightweight structure, and ease of integration with planar circuit designs. These antennas are widely employed in various applications, including mobile phones, satellite communications, and wireless networks. The performance of a microstrip antenna is significantly influenced by the choice of substrate material, which affects its electrical properties and, consequently, its operational characteristics. The substrate material plays a crucial role in determining the impedance matching, bandwidth, and overall efficiency of the antenna. Commonly used substrates such as FR4, Rogers RT/Duroid, and Teflon exhibit distinct electrical properties, including dielectric constant and loss tangent, which impact the antenna's performance metrics. The dielectric constant of the substrate affects the effective permittivity of the antenna, influencing parameters such as resonant frequency, bandwidth, and gain. Similarly, the loss tangent of the substrate determines the dielectric losses, which can affect the efficiency and radiation pattern of the antenna. This paper aims to provide a comprehensive performance comparison of microstrip antennas fabricated with different substrate materials across multiple frequency ranges. By evaluating antennas with substrates like FR4, Rogers RT/Duroid, and Teflon, we seek to understand how variations in substrate properties influence key performance metrics such as return loss, bandwidth, gain, and radiation pattern. The study employs both simulation and experimental methodologies to analyze the antennas' behavior in diverse operational environments. The motivation behind this comparative study is to offer insights into how substrate material selection impacts the overall performance of microstrip antennas. This information is crucial for designing antennas tailored to specific application requirements, whether for high-frequency applications requiring low-loss materials or cost-effective solutions where broader bandwidth is necessary. By systematically exploring the relationship between substrate materials and antenna performance, this paper aims to provide valuable guidelines for optimizing microstrip antenna designs and advancing the development of efficient communication systems.

II. BASIC STRUCTURE

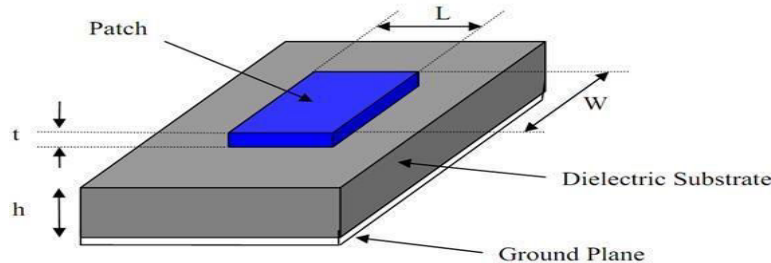


Fig1. Structure of Microstrip Antenna

In its most basic form, a Microstrip patch antenna consists of a radiating patch on one side of a dielectric substrate which also has a ground plane on the other side as shown in Figure 1. The patch [2] is generally made of conducting materials such as copper or gold and can take any possible shape. The radiating patch and the feed lines are usually photo etched on the dielectric substrate.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Deschamps first proposed the concept of the MSA in 1953. However, practical antennas were developed by Munson and Howell in the 1970s [1,2,3]. The numerous advantages of MSA, such as its low weight, small volume and ease of fabrication using printed-circuit technology, led to the design of several configurations for various applications. With increasing requirements for personal and mobile communications, the demand for smaller and low-profile antennas has brought the MSA to the forefront [1].

Goyal R et al.[7] put forward the bow shape microstrip antenna having Benzocyclobuten as a substrate material. It was a rectangular patch antenna but the size was reduced upto 40% that of conventional rectangular patch antenna. Resonant frequency was found 4.35 GHz when tested experimentally. Antenna with Benzocyclobuten material shows good results for return loss and radiation pattern.

Awan,Munir et al. [8] exploited this feature and worked on three different types of materials viz. FR4, GML 1000 and RT/Duroid 5880. Antenna was designed for 2.5GHz and simulated with those materials. Simulation software HFSS has been used. Design of 8 element microstrip patch array for 10GHz shows good experimental results as compare to the desirable results. 10GHz X-Band antenna is useful in small countries where the small area is required to cover by emission of microwave beams through satellite. This patch antenna with narrow beam-width of approximately 20 deg to 365 deg are required to complete the satellite communication coverage.

Rathi V et al. [9] has worked on effects of substrate thickness on antenna parameters. The designed frequency was 2.4 GHz. They have studied different properties by making changes in substrate parameters.

Chen,W et al [10]. has made an attempt to answer questions like i) how does the impedance of antenna changes with change in substrate thickness. ii) how does the impedance bandwidth of antenna changes with change in substrate thickness. iii) what is the effect of feed location on impedance bandwidth. Numerical results are presented to show the clear effects of each parameter.

Singh and Tripathi V. L et al.[11] worked on two layer conventional substrate with different permeability and different height. The designed frequency is 2.4GHz. The slot antenna fabricated on reactive impedance substrate (RIS). The final optimized structure exhibits an axial-ratio bandwidth of about 15% and impedance bandwidth better than 10%.

Antenna Design

In order to identify and verify the improvement for rectangular structure in microstrip antenna, the conventional Microstrip antenna design method is used [1].

Design Steps:

Designing the patch antenna is to employ the following formulas as an outline for the design procedures.

i. Width (W)

$$W = \frac{c}{f_r \sqrt{\epsilon_r}} \tag{1}$$

Where

c - free space velocity of light, 3×10^8 m/s f_r - frequency of operation
 ϵ_r - dielectric constant

ii. Effective Dielectric constant (ϵ_{reff})

$$\epsilon_{reff} = \epsilon_r \left[\frac{1 + \frac{h}{W}}{2} \right]^{-1} + \frac{\epsilon_r - 1}{2} \tag{2}$$

ϵ_r - dielectric constant

h - Height of dielectric substrate W - Width of the patch

iii. Effective Length (L_{eff})

$$L_{eff} = \frac{c}{f_r \sqrt{\epsilon_{reff}}} \left[1 + \frac{\epsilon_r - 1}{2} \left(\frac{h}{W} \right)^2 \right]^{-1} \tag{3}$$

Where;

c - Free space velocity of light, 3×10^8 m/s f_r - frequency of operation
 ϵ_{reff} - effective dielectric constant

iv. Patch Length Extension (ΔL)

$$\Delta L = 0.412h \frac{(\epsilon_{reff} + 0.3) \left(\frac{W}{h} + 0.264 \right)}{(\epsilon_{reff} - 0.258) \left(\frac{W}{h} + 0.8 \right)}$$

v. Actual Length of Patch (L)

$$L = L_{eff} + 2\Delta L \tag{4}$$

(5)

III. ANTENNA MODELING

In this paper, rectangular patch antenna have been designed using HFSS. The substrate materials are FR4 and DURIOD. Antenns are designed for different frequencies viz. 2.4GHz, 3GHz, 3.5GHz, 4GHZ. To calculate antenna dimensions by conventional method we need to provide some data like substrate height, its dielectric constant etc. Table No.1 Shows modeling of antenna for different frequencies using two substrate materials. FR4 has dielectric constant of 4.4 where as the DUROID- 6006 has dielectric constant of 6.

Table1. Dimensions of an Antenna with Different Substrates

Substrate Material	Frequency	Dimensions	
		Width (W)	Length (L)
FR4	2.4 GHz	38.03 mm	29.46 mm
	3.0 GHz	30.42 mm	23.45 mm
	3.5 GHz	26.08 mm	20.02 mm
	4.0 GHz	22.82 mm	17.43 mm
DUROID-6006	2.4 GHz	33.40 mm	25.26 mm
	3.0 GHz	26.72 mm	20.11 mm

	3.5 GHz	22.90 mm	17.15 mm
	4.0 GHz	20.04 mm	14.93 mm

IV. RESULT COMPARISON

Table2. Result comparison of Designed Frequency and Simulated Frequency.

Material	Designed Frequency	Simulated Frequency
FR4 ($\epsilon_r=4.4$)	2.4 GHz	2.33 GHz
	3.0 GHz	2.91 GHz
	3.5 GHz	3.35 GHz
	4.0 GHz	3.83 GHz
DUROID-6006 ($\epsilon_r=6$)	2.4 GHz	2.23 GHz
	3.0 GHz	2.89 GHz
	3.5 GHz	3.33 GHz
	4.0 GHz	3.80 GHz

After modeling of antenna, the structure is designed in HFSS software and results are obtained for return loss and radiation pattern.

TableNo.2 shows the designed frequency and the frequency obtained from HFSS simulator. Frequencies obtained by using FR4 material are closer to the designed frequency.

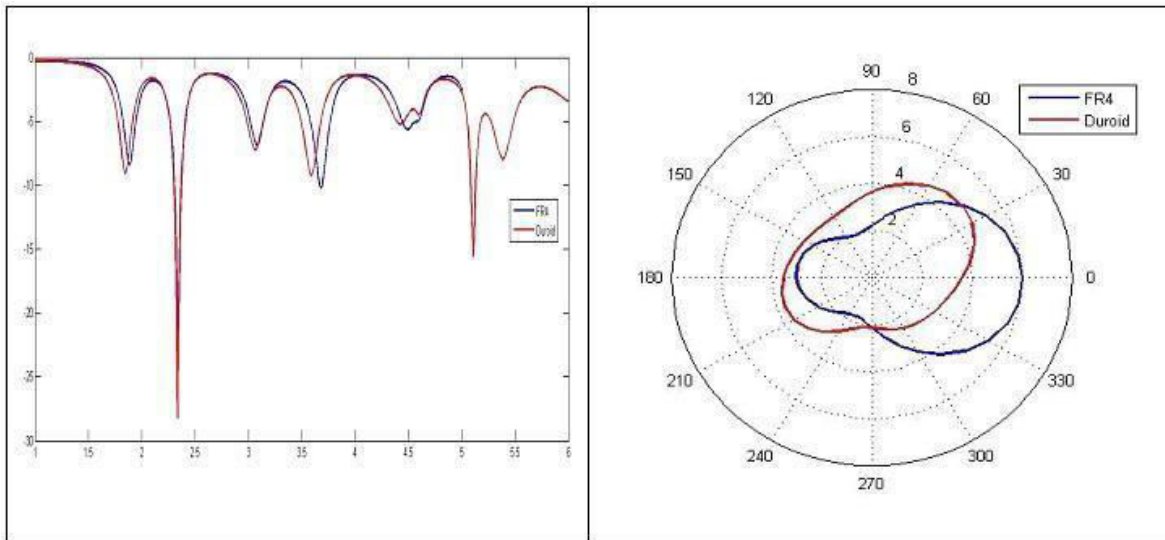


Fig2. Return Loss (S11) and Radiation Pattern at 2.4 GHz

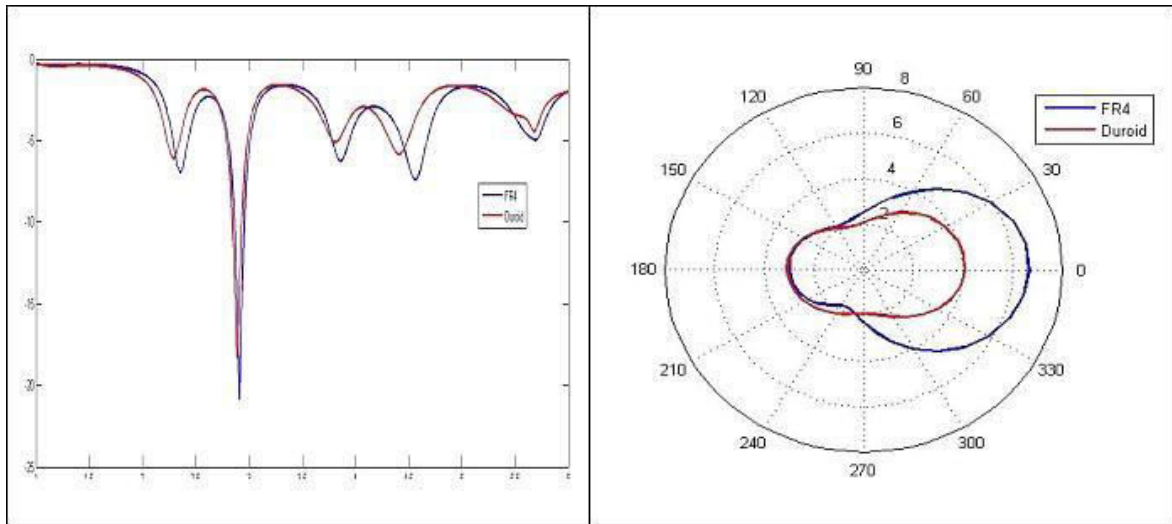


Fig3. Return Loss (S11) and Radiation Pattern at 3GHz

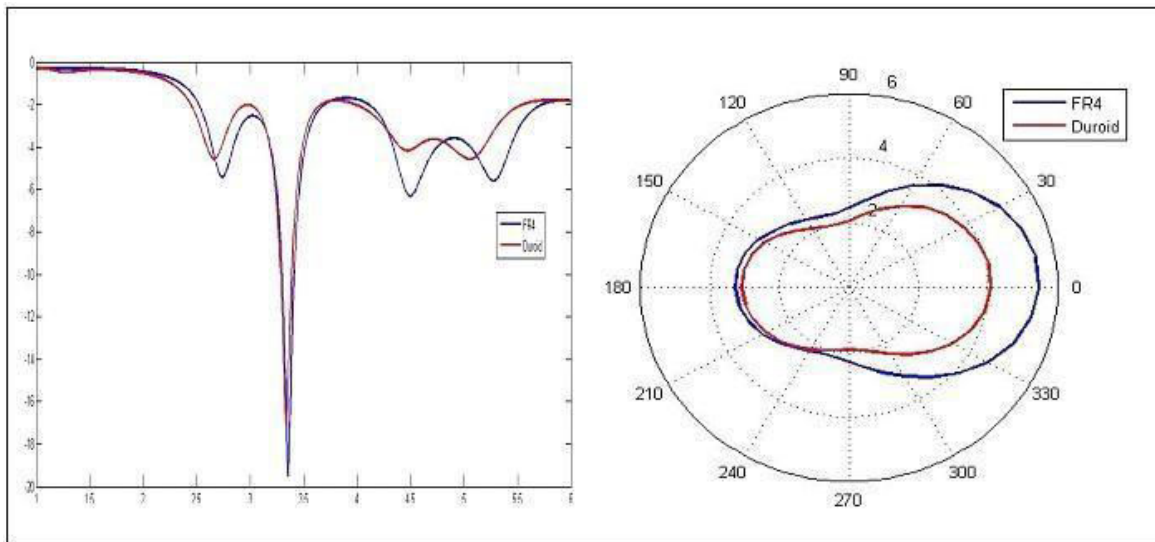


Fig4. Return Loss (S11) and Radiation Pattern at 3.5GHz

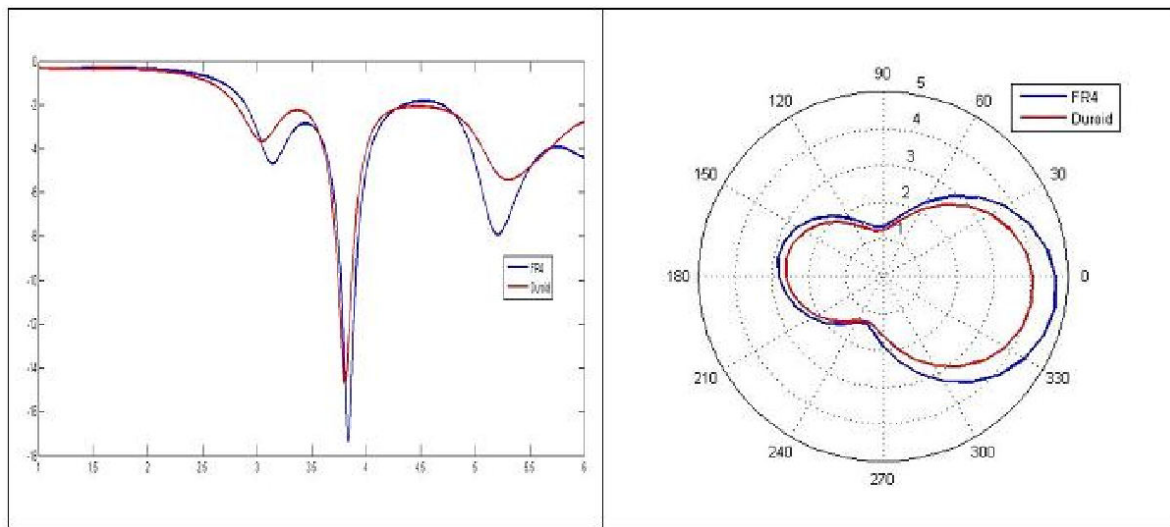


Fig5. Return Loss (S11) and Radiation Pattern at 4GHz

V. CONCLUSION

The performance of microstrip Antenna is mainly depend on its structure and dimensions but the substrate material shows significant role in performance parameters such as Return Loss (S11). The rectangular patch antenna is designed for 4 different frequencies with two FR4 and DUROID-6006. The result shows that FR4 material is quite suitable for frequencies up to 4GHz. The reflection at the source and axial directivity of the antennas designed by FR4 is better than antennas designed by using DUROID-6006.

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