SAQIB AZIM

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INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

HITACHI, LTD. R&D GROUP
Oct '19 - Sep '21

Assistant Researcher, Intelligent Vision Research Group — **Tokyo, Japan**

- Developed a **Visual Localization, Mapping** and **Navigation** system using **deep learning**.
- Implemented **ORB**-keypoint based camera pose estimation and tracking, keyframe-based 3D mapping, trajectory optimization and loop closure in **C++**.
- Engineered a novel time-efficient targeted inference segmentation network to detect dynamic objects, reducing localization time by **5x** leading to **patent submission**.
- **Improved** dynamic scene localization error by **47%** compared to SOTA methods.
- Deployed navigation system on Android (Java & C++) with significant **product impact**.
- Created Visual Hazardous Activity Detection using **Mask RCNN** segmentation and depth estimation. **Showcased** working prototype at a Railway Factory.
- Achieved **94% accuracy** in segmenting and classifying hand gestures using egocentric images by training end-to-end **MobileNet SSD** and **UNet** models.
- Used **Unity** engine to generate synthetic visual data for training deep learning models.

SAMSUNG R&D INSTITUTE
May '18 - Jul '18

Machine Learning Intern — Bengaluru, India

- Developed a **handwritten text recognition** system using Samsung smartwatch.
- Devised a data-collection framework and trained a combined **SVM** and **LSTM** models to learn relation between wrist movement and characters, achieving **93% accuracy**.

SELECTED PROJECTS

Graduate Research Assistant - Existential Robotics Lab
Dec '22 - Jun '23

- Developing **Deep Reinforcement Learning** models for robot manipulation tasks.
- Employed **Soft Actor-Critic**, **PPO** and **Generative Adversarial Imitation Learning** algorithms to learn optimal task-policy in **RoboSuite** and **DeepMind** environments.
- Transferred learned policies to robot arm (**Sim2Real**) using computer vision algorithms.

Object Pose Estimation and Neural Radiance Field (NeRF)
Fall '22

- Utilized **PointNet** for object semantic segmentation, **Iterative Closest Point** algorithm for estimating 6D pose of segmented objects with **96% test accuracy**.
- Implemented **NeRF** to fit and generate photo-realistic novel views of a scene.

Adversarial Robustness Analysis of Deep Models
Apr '22 - Aug '22

- Utilized attack methods (FGSM, PGD, Auto-Attack) to generate adversarial examples.
- Conducted empirical analysis of CLIP model's resilience to adversarial perturbations.
- Developed **robust CLIP**-based classifier against l_2-norm perturbations using adversarial training and randomized smoothing. Evaluated on **CIFAR10**, **ImageNet** datasets.

Speech Enhancement using Convolutional-RNN and Wavelets
Fall '22

- Built an end-to-end data-driven convolutional-RNN model to enhance speech quality.
- Employed **wavelet pooling** and evaluated performance using SNR, PESQ, STOI metrics.
- Demonstrated improved performance with faster convergence on real-world dataset.

Enhancing Road-Scene Understanding through Image Inpainting
Winter '22

- Used a combined **DeepLabV3** segmentation model and Fourier-convolution based inpainting network for undesired object removal and missing region completion.
- Trained the model on **CityScapes** dataset and generated superior road-image quality.

Zero-Shot Learning for Image Recognition

- Proposed a semi-supervised VGG16 encoder-decoder network to learn visual-semantic mapping using novel combination of hinge-rank loss and **Word2Vec** embeddings.
- Improved unseen class recognition accuracy from 58.7% to 65.3% on AwA dataset.

EDUCATION

UC San Diego
Sep '21 – Sep '23

- **MS** in **ECE** **(AI, Machine Learning, Computer Vision, Reinforcement Learning)**

Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay
Mumbai, India 2015 – 2019

- **B.Tech** in **Electrical Engineering** with Minor in **Computer Science**
- **Undergraduate Research Award** in 2019.

PUBLICATION & PATENT

- **Saqib Azim**, T. Nito and K. Nakamura, "**Visual Localization in Dynamic Environments with Targeted-Inference SLAM**", *Japan Patent Application, filed Aug '21 (pending)*
- P. Sankhe, **Saqib Azim**, S. Goyal, T. Choudhary, K. Appaiah and S. Srikant, "**Indoor Distance Estimation using LSTMs over WLAN Network**", *IEEE Workshop on Positioning, Navigation and Communications 2019 & Indian Patent Application, filed Dec '18*

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- **Programming** - Python, C/C++, MATLAB, Bash, Java, HTML, CSS
- **Frameworks** - TensorFlow, PyTorch, Scikit-Learn, NumPy, Matplotlib, Pandas, OpenCV, CUDA, MLOps, ROS, AWS, Google Cloud
- **Dev Tools** - Git, Github, Docker, Android, Unity, Kubernetes, Jupyter, Linux
- **DL Models** - CNN, RNN, LSTM, Transformer, VAE, GAN, Diffusion, ResNets, LLMs

RELEVANT COURSES

- Deep Generative Models
- Deep Learning for 3D data
- (Intro) and (Advanced) Machine Learning
- Deep Reinforcement Learning
- Statistical Learning
- Computer Vision
- Advanced Computer Vision
- Sensing and Estimation in Robotics
- Mathematics for Robotics
- Convex Optimization and Applications
- Advanced Image Processing
- Data Structures and Algorithms

ACHIEVEMENT & ROLES

- Secured rank of **1133** (*out of 1.5 million*) in **IIT-JEE** (India's toughest entrance exam).
- **Teaching Assistant** for 5 undergraduate and graduate courses at UC San Diego.
  - Probabilistic Modeling & Machine Learning
  - Probability & Statistics for Data Science
  - Engineering Probability & Statistics
  - Image Processing
  - Linear Signals & Systems