A Miniaturized LPF with Sharp Transition-band  
Using Semi-circle Resonators

Saeed Roshani 1, A. R. Golestanifar 2, A. H. Ghaderi 2, and Sobhan Roshani 1

1 Department of Electrical Engineering, Kermanshah Branch, Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah, Iran
2 Young Researchers and Elite Club, Kermanshah Branch, Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah, Iran

Abstract — In this paper, a miniaturized microstrip low-pass filter (LPF) with sharp transition-band, wide stop-band and negligible insertion-loss in pass-band is proposed using semi-circle and butterfly resonators. The cutoff frequency of the proposed LPF is 1.75 GHz. The proposed LPF presents a wide stop-band from 2.1 to 23.73 GHz (2nd-14th harmonics) with -20 dB attenuation level. The overall dimension of the proposed filter is 0.11λg × 0.1λg. The sharpness of transition-band is 112 dB/GHz, from 1.75 to 2.26 GHz with corresponding attenuation levels of -3 dB and -60 dB, respectively. The insertion-loss in pass-band is less than 0.05 dB. The proposed LPF is simulated, fabricated and measured, which there is a good agreement between the results of simulation and measurement. The LPF has been designed for L-band applications.

Index Terms — L-band, LPF, open stub, semi-circle resonator, sharp transition-band.

I. INTRODUCTION

Microstrip low-pass filters with small size, low cost, wide stop-band and sharp cut-off frequency are necessary demand for wireless communication circuits to suppress undesirable signals [1, 2]. In [3], a low-pass filter with sharp transition-band was introduced using defected ground structure (DGS). This filter suffers, narrow stop-band and large circuit dimension. In [4], a miniaturized LPF with high return-loss in pass-band was reported using interdigital structure. Slow transition-band and the limited stop-band are draw backs of this work. In [5], a LPF with sharp cut-off frequency was reported using triangular and T-shaped resonators. This structure has low suppression level in stop-band and occupied large area. In [6], a microstrip LPF with stepped-impedance units was presented. Negligible ripple in pass-band and small size are advantages of this work, although roll-off rate is not so sharp. A low-pass filter was reported in [7], which has low suppression level in the stop-band area. In [8], a LPF with hairpin-resonator was presented, which the stop-band is narrow. In [9, 10], LPFs with small size were introduced using hairpin resonators, which gradual transition-band and narrow stop-band are undesired features of these works. In [11], a low-pass filter with defected rectangular resonator was reported. The cut-off frequency of the filter is not sharp and the stopband is narrow. In [12], a LPF with low rejection level and narrow stop-band was introduced. In [13], a microstrip LPF was reported using multi-mode resonators, which the transition-band is not sharp. In [14], a LPF with wide stop-band was presented based on DGS. The transition-band of this filter is not so sharp. In [15], a LPF with Butterworth response was presented. This LPF has a sharp transition-band and wide stop-band, but the structure has low attenuation level compared with conventional Butterworth filter. In [16], a microstrip structure with rectangular resonators was reported. To extend the stop-band, a DGS composed of four u-shaped resonators was utilized. However, the presented LPF suffers, ripple in pass-band and slow transition-band.

In this study, a novel structure with sharp transition-band, wide stop-band, low ripple in passband and miniaturized size is proposed. The stop-band is extended to 23.73 GHz with -20 dB attenuation level. All electromagnetic (EM) simulations of microstrip layouts and all L-C simulations of equivalent circuits are performed using Advanced Design System (ADS 2011.10) software (Agilent Technologies, Santa Clara, CA). Scattering parameters measurement of fabricated device and EM simulations results of proposed LPF are in good agreement, which confirms the validity of the proposed LPF.

II. DESIGN PROCESS

A. Primitive semi-circle resonator

The primitive semi-circle resonator is designed on RT/Duroid 5880 substrate with relative permittivity of 2.2, thickness of 0.381 mm and loss-tangent of 0.0009. Also copper with thickness of 10µm is utilized as conductor strip lines. In order to design an LPF with wide stopband, a semi-circle resonator is used. The
layout of the primitive semi-circle resonator is depicted in Fig. 1 (a). This structure consists of a high-impedance line and a semi-circle shaped stub, which they are connected to the transmission line, based on Fig. 1 (a). The L-C equivalent circuit of this resonator is demonstrated in Fig. 1(b), which, the inductance and capacitance of the corresponding transmission lines are \( L_1, L_2 \) and \( C_1 \), respectively. \( L_3 \) is inductance of high-impedance line and \( C_2 \) is the sum of open-ended and low-impedance lines capacitances. The EM simulations and L-C equivalent circuit simulation results are in good agreement and there is a transmission-zero (T\(_Z\)) at 8.8 GHz with -55 dB attenuation level as shown in Fig. 1(c).

Table 1: The optimized values of L-C equivalent circuit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>( C_1 )</th>
<th>( C_2 )</th>
<th>( L_1 )</th>
<th>( L_2 )</th>
<th>( L_3 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>1.264</td>
<td>0.561</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>0.597</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Units: \( C=\text{[pF]} \); \( L=\text{[nH]} \)).

In order to have a focus on computational theory, the applied resonators are modeled using LC equivalent circuits. To find accurate using LC equivalent circuits, applied microstrip discontinuities and components that are encountered in the proposed filter designs are described in Fig. 2. In the layout of proposed filter steps, open-ends, high-impedance short-line element and low-impedance short-line element are used, which these components and LC equivalent circuits are shown in Fig. 2. For a symmetrical step, the capacitance and inductances of the equivalent circuit indicated in Fig. 2 (a). At the open end of a microstrip line the fields do not stop abruptly but extend slightly further due to the effect of the fringing field. This effect can be modeled either with an equivalent shunt capacitance as shown in Fig. 2 (b).

Fig. 2. Microstrip discontinuities: (a) step, (b) open-end, (c) high-impedance short-line, and (d) low-impedance short-line elements and their equivalent circuits [2].

The ABCD-parameters for a two-port network are [1]:

\[
\begin{bmatrix}
V_1 \\
I_1
\end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix}
A & B \\
C & D
\end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix}
V_2 \\
I_2
\end{bmatrix}.
\]  

(1)
According to (1), the ABCD-parameters of L-C equivalent circuit for primitive semi-circle resonator are obtained as follows:

\[ A = C_1 L_1 S^2 + \frac{C_2 L_1 S^2}{C_2 S^2 + 1}, \]
\[ B = L_1 S + C_1 L_1 L_2 S^3 + \frac{C_2 L_1 L_2 S^3}{C_2 S^2 + 1}, \]
\[ C = C_1 S + \frac{C_2 S}{C_2 S^2 + 1}, \]
\[ D = C_1 L_2 S^2 + \frac{C_2 L_2 S^2}{C_2 S^2 + 1} + 1. \]

The S-parameter \( S_{21} \) in terms of ABCD-parameters is [1]:

\[ S_{21} = \frac{2}{A + B Z_0 + C Z_0 + D}. \]

From (6), \( S_{21} \) of L-C equivalent circuit is:

\[ S_{21} = \frac{(2 Z_0 (C_2 L_3 S^2 + 1))}{S^5 (C_1 L_1 C_2 L_2 L_3)} + S^4 (C_1 L_1 C_2 L_2 Z_0 + C_1 L_2 C_2 L_3 Z_0) + S^3 (C_1 L_3 C_2 Z_0^2 + C_2 L_1 L_2 + C_1 L_1 L_2 + C_2 L_1 L_2) + S^2 (C_1 L_1 Z_0 + C_1 L_1 Z_0 + C_2 L_2 Z_0 + C_1 L_2 Z_0 + 2 C_2 L_2 Z_0) + S (C_1 Z_0^2 + C_2 Z_0^2 + L_1 + L_2) + 2 Z_0 + 1). \]

The \( T_{Z1} \) is obtained using Equation (7):

\[ T_{Z1} = \frac{1}{2 \pi \sqrt{L_3}}. \]

According to (8), the location of \( T_{Z1} \) is a function of \( C_2 \) and \( L_3 \). According to Fig. 3 (a) and Table 1, decreasing in value of \( C_2 \) (when \( L_3 \) is unchanged) moves \( T_{Z1} \) to the higher frequencies and vice versa. Also, decreasing in value of \( L_3 \) (when \( C_2 \) is unchanged) moves \( T_{Z1} \) to the higher frequencies and vice versa, as shown in Fig. 3 (b). So, the values of L-C equivalent circuit in Table 1 is selected, to achieve a transmission-zero at the desired frequency.

### B. Symmetrical semi-circle resonator

To achieve a wide stop-band and better performance, symmetrical semi-circle resonator is designed. The substrate and conductor material are same as mentioned below. The layout of the symmetrical semi-circle resonator is depicted in Fig. 4 (a). According to Fig. 4 (b), this resonator with simple structure can generate a wide stop-band (from 3.9 to 22 GHz with -20 dB attenuation level). Although the transition-band is not very sharp. The proposed structure creates a transmission-zero (\( T_{Z2} \)) at 13.8 GHz with -47 dB attenuation, as seen in Fig. 4 (b).

### C. Butterfly resonator

To achieve a sharp transition-band, a butterfly resonator is proposed. The layout and L-C equivalent circuit of butterfly resonator are demonstrated in Fig. 5 (a) and 5 (b), respectively. According to Fig. 5 (b), the corresponding inductances and capacitances of transmission line are \( L_4 \), \( L_5 \) and \( C_3 \), respectively. \( L_6 \) and \( L_7 \) are the inductances of high-impedance line and low impedance stub, respectively. \( C_1 \) is the sum of open stub and low-impedance stub capacitances. According to Fig.
5 (c), the EM simulations and L-C equivalent circuit simulation results are in good agreement. Also there is a transmission-zero ($T_{Z3}$) at 2.4 GHz with -52 dB attenuation level as seen in Fig. 5 (c). The L-C equivalent circuit values are optimized by ADS software and they are summarized in Table 2. The dimensions of this resonator are: $A_1=10.45$, $A_2=3.07$, $A_3=5.5$, $A_4=0.4$, $A_5=3.92$, $A_6=0.15$ (unit: millimeter) and $\phi_2=90^\circ$. The substrate and conductor material are same as mentioned below.

Table 2: The optimized values of L-C equivalent circuit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>$L_4$</th>
<th>$L_5$</th>
<th>$L_6$</th>
<th>$L_7$</th>
<th>$C_3$</th>
<th>$C_1$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>7.415</td>
<td>2.364</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.422</td>
<td>0.819</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Units: $C=[\text{pF}]$; $L=[\text{nH}]$).

As the simulation results shown in the Fig. 5 (c), the butterfly resonator has good performance. The insertion loss in pass band is zero ($S_{21}=0 \text{ dB}$). In the stop band this resonator creates a strong transmission-zero ($T_{Z3}$) near the desired cut-frequency of the proposed LPF, which results in a good performance compare to the primitive resonator. Unfortunately, the input and output return losses ($S_{11}$, $S_{12}$) of butterfly resonator in pass band are not so good and the transition band is not so sharp, therefore to improve the performance symmetrical semi-circle resonator and butterfly resonator are combined together, which will be discussed in Section II.D

The ABCD-parameters of L-C equivalent circuit for butterfly resonator are as follows:

$$A = C_3 L_4 S^2 + \frac{2C_4 L_4 S^2}{(2C_4 L_6 + C_3 L_4)S^2 + 1}, \quad (9)$$

$$B = L_4 S + C_4 L_4 L_5 S^3 + \frac{2C_4 L_4 L_5^3}{(2C_4 L_6 + C_4 L_5)S^2 + 1} + L_5 S, \quad (10)$$

$$C = C_3 S + \frac{2C_4 L_4 S}{(2C_4 L_6 + C_4 L_5)S^2 + 1}, \quad (11)$$

$$D = C_3 L_5 S^2 + \frac{2C_4 L_5 S^2}{(2C_4 L_6 + C_4 L_5)S^2 + 1} + 1. \quad (12)$$

From (6), $S_{21}$ of L-C equivalent circuit for butterfly resonator is:

$$S_{21} = \left(\frac{2Z_0 (2C_4 L_6 + C_4 L_5)S^2 + 1}{(S^2(2C_4 L_6 + C_4 L_5)S^2 + 1) + S^3(2Z_0 C_4 L_6 C_3 L_4 + Z_0 C_4 L_6 C_5 L_7 + 2Z_0 L_5 C_4 L_6 + L_5 L_6 C_4 L_5)} + 2C_4 L_5 C_3 L_4 + 2L_5 C_4 L_6 + L_5 C_4 L_7 + S^2(C_3 L_5 C_0 Z_0 + 2C_4 L_5 L_7 + 4Z_0 C_4 L_6 + 2Z_0 C_4 L_7 + Z_0 C_4 L_4) + S(C_3 Z_0^2 + 2C_4 Z_0^2 + L_4 + L_5) + 2Z_0 + 1)\right). \quad (13)$$

The $T_{Z3}$ is obtained using Equation (13):

$$F_{T_{Z3}} = \frac{1}{2Z_0 \sqrt{(2C_4 L_6 + C_4 L_5)S^2}}. \quad (14)$$

According to (14), the location of $T_{Z3}$ is a function of $L_6$ and $C_4$, which $L_6$ and $C_4$ are inductance and capacitance of $A_9$ and $A_{11}$ in Fig. 5 (a), respectively. Decreasing in the value of $A_9$ (when $A_{11}$ is unchanged) and decreasing in the value of $A_{11}$ (when $A_9$ is unchanged), moves $T_{Z3}$ to the higher frequencies, as depicted in Fig. 6 (a) and 5 (b), respectively. So to have sharp transition-band, $T_{Z3}$ is tuned at 2.4 GHz and values of L-C equivalent circuit are obtained in Table 2.
D. Primitive LPF

To approach a wide stop-band and sharp transition-band, symmetrical semi-circle resonator and butterfly resonator are combined, with same substrate and conductor strip line material as mentioned below, based on Fig. 7 (a). Although this structure, suffers from high ripple in pass-band and low return-loss in pass-band and a transmission pole that limits the suppression level and stopband bandwidth of primitive low pass filter, as seen in Fig. 7 (b). The distance between the resonators is \( A_{13} = 6.26 \) mm.

E. Proposed LPF

According to Fig. 7 (b), there is a transmission-pole at 19 GHz, which limits the stop-band of primitive LPF. Therefore, two suppressing cells, with same substrate and conductor material as mentioned below, are added to primitive LPF to extend the stop-band and the transmission line is bended without increasing dimension as depicted in Fig. 8 (a). EM simulations illustrate wide stop-band, sharp transition-band. Moreover, the ripple in pass-band has been reduced (less than 0.05 dB) and a good return-loss in pass-band (20 dB) is achieved, as seen in Fig. 8 (b). Physical dimensions of the proposed LPF are: \( L_1 = 4.33, \ L_2 = 3.96, \ L_3 = 1.8, \ L_4 = 1, \ L_5 = 1.5, \ L_6 = 1.17, \ L_7 = 3.07, \ L_8 = 0.96, \ L_9 = 1.22, \ L_{10} = 0.97, \ L_{11} = 5.5, \ L_{12} = 0.8, \ D_1 = 0.4, \ D_2 = 0.15, \ D_3 = 0.23, \ D_4 = 0.05, \ D_5 = 0.3, \ D_6 = 0.1, \ R_1 = 0.5, \ R_2 = 3.92 \) and \( R_3 = 4.12 \) (all in millimeters). Also \( \theta_1 = 90^\circ, \ \theta_2 = 170^\circ \).

Fig. 8. (a) Layout and (b) EM simulations of proposed LPF.

III. MEASURED AND SIMULATED RESULTS

The proposed low-pass filter has been designed and fabricated on the RT-Duorid 5880 substrate with relative permittivity of 2.2, thickness of 0.381 mm and loss-tangent of 0.0009 Also, copper with thickness of 10µm
is utilized as conductor strip lines. The photograph of fabricated low-pass filter is illustrated in Fig. 9 (a). There is a good agreement between measurement and simulation results, as demonstrated in Fig. 9 (b). The S-parameters are measured using the network analyzer N5230A and. The results demonstrate that, proposed LPF presents very good size reduction compared with previous works. The final circuit dimensions of the proposed low-pass filter are only 13.72 × 12.6 mm² (0.11λ₁ × 0.1λ₁). The proposed LPF indicates high suppression in a wide stop-band from 2.1 to 23.73 GHz with more than -20 dB attenuation level (measurement results), which suppresses the 2nd-14th harmonics. The performance comparison among published filters and proposed one have been illustrated in Table 3.

In Table 3, the sharpness of transition-band (ξ) is:

\[ \xi = \frac{f_{\text{max}} - f_{\text{min}}}{f_{\text{c}} - f_{\text{c}}} \text{ (dB/GHz)}, \]

and \(f_{\text{max}}\) is -60 dB suppression level; \(f_{\text{min}}\) is -3 dB suppression level; \(f_{\text{c}}\) is the frequency corresponds with -60 dB suppression level and \(f_{\text{c}}\) is the corresponding frequency with -3 dB suppression level. The relative stop-band band-width (RSB) is given by:

\[ \text{RSB} = \frac{\text{stopband bandwidth}}{\text{stopband center frequency}} \]

The suppressing factor (SF) is:

\[ SF = \frac{\text{suppression level}}{10} \]

The normalized circuit size (NCS) is:

\[ NCS = \frac{\text{physical size (NCSh)}}{\lambda_0^2} \]

The λ₀ is the length of guided wavelength at -3 dB cut off frequency and for calculation of architecture facture, this parameter has below values: for circuits with 1 dimension is defined 1 and for circuits with three dimension the AF is defined 2.

Finally, the figure of merit (FOM) is defined as:

\[ FOM = \frac{\text{RSB} \times \xi \times \text{SF}}{\text{AF} \times \text{NCS}}. \]

IV. CONCLUSION

A miniaturized low-pass filter with high FOM and ultra-wide stop-band is proposed. The proposed filter demonstrates very good performance such as low insertion-loss in pass-band, wide stop-band, sharp transition-band and small dimension. The final circuit dimension is only 0.11λ₁ × 0.1λ₁. The cut off frequency of the proposed LPF is 1.75 GHz. The proposed structure suppresses 2nd to 14th harmonics with more than 20 dB attention level. With the above desirable features, the proposed filter is suitable for L-band applications.

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Saeed Roshani received the B.Sc. degree in Electrical Engineering from Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran in 2008, M.Sc. degree in Electrical Engineering from Shahed University, Tehran, Iran in 2011 and Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Razi University in 2015. He performed opportunity research program in Amirkabir University of Technology (Tehran Polytechnics) Iran, in 2014-2015. He graduated as the Best Student of his country among all students of Iran in 2015 and awarded by the First Vice President and Science, Research & Technology Minister. He is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering at Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah, Iran. He has published more than 40 papers in ISI Journals and Conferences and two books. His research interest includes the microwave and millimeter wave devices and circuits, low-power and low-size integrated circuit design.

Alireza Golestanifar was born in Kermanshah, Iran in 1993. He received his B.Sc. degree in Electronics Engineering in 2015 from Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah, Iran and he is now pursuing his M.Sc. degree from Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah, Iran. His current research includes microwave passive circuits and RF integrated circuit design.

Amirhossein Ghaderi was born in Kermanshah, Iran in 1992. He received his B.Sc. degree in Electronics Engineering in 2015 from Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah, Iran (Honor) and he is currently working towards the M.Sc. degree in Electronics Engineering from Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah, Iran. He was selected as the Best Student in the Electronics Engineering Department
and awarded by the University President of Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah, Iran in 2014. His current research includes microwave passive circuits and RF integrated circuit design.

Sobhan Roshani received the B.Sc. degree in Electrical Engineering from Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran in 2010, M.Sc. degree in Electrical Engineering from Iran University of Science & Technology-IUST, Tehran, Iran in 2012 and Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Razi University in 2016. His research interest includes switching power amplifiers, microwave circuits, image processing, optimization and neural networks. He is currently working with Department of Electrical Engineering at Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah, Iran.