



Interference management issues for the future 5G network: a review

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Abstract

The future wireless Fifth Generation (5G) communication network required a higher bandwidth in order to achieve greater data rate. It will be largely characterized by small cell deployments, typically in the range of 200 meters of radius/cell, at most. The implementation of small size networks delivers various advantages such as high data rate and low signal delay. However, it also suffers from various issues such as inter-cell, intra-cell, and inter-user interferences. This paper discusses the issues related to interference management for 5G network from the perspective of Heterogeneous Network and Device-to-Device communication, by using enabling techniques, such as Inter-cell Interference Coordination, Coordinated Multipoint, and Coordinated Scheduling. Furthermore, several pertinent issues have been critically reviewed focusing on their methodologies, advantages and limitations along with the future work. Future directions proposed by the 3rd Generation Partnership Project for interference mitigation has also been outlined. This review will act as a guide for the researchers to comprehend various existing and emerging enabling interference mitigation techniques for further exploration and smooth implementation of 5G wireless network.

Keywords Interference management · 5G · CoMP · ICIC · Coordinated scheduling · HetNet · D2D

1 Introduction

Current demands of high data rates for mobile users are challenging newer technologies to be invented for the progress of 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP) access networks [1]. Several researchers and mobile operators are working with the 3GPP to achieve higher throughput with greater user capacity [2]. The next generation mobile network will be stated as 5G and expected to be commercialized until the year 2020 [3]. The predicted data rate for the 5G network is around 100 Gbps with a minimum of 1 ms latency along with better user capacity and battery life [4, 5]. In order to achieve the acceptable Quality of Service

(QoS), various potential solutions are in progress such as, use of Millimeter-wave (mm-wave) frequency band [6–10], Massive Multiple-Input and Multiple-Output (MIMO) [11], Cooperative network using Relay Nodes (RN) [12], Coordinated Multipoint (CoMP) [13], Wireless Software Defines Networking (WSDN), Device-to-Device (D2D) communication [14], Internet of Things (IoT) [15, 16], Ethernet Passive Optical Network (EPON) [17], Big Data and Mobile Cloud Computing [18]. Apart from this, there are several power optimizations [19, 20] and scheduling algorithms [21] are in progress, which can be incorporated in the existing technologies to achieve higher overall network performance.

With the increase in the number of communication devices, the requirement for higher bandwidth is essential [22]. Therefore, a robust solution is to be devised with a focus on providing higher spectral efficiency with acceptable network performance [23]. Higher data rate and greater capacity at the user end can be achieved by allocating more resource blocks (RBs) to each user in the network, therefore, higher bandwidth is imperative [24]. In other words, higher bandwidth will permit larger throughput to mobile users enabling them to download and upload advanced multimedia services including High Definition (HD) video calling, streaming, and other data-hungry applications [25, 26].

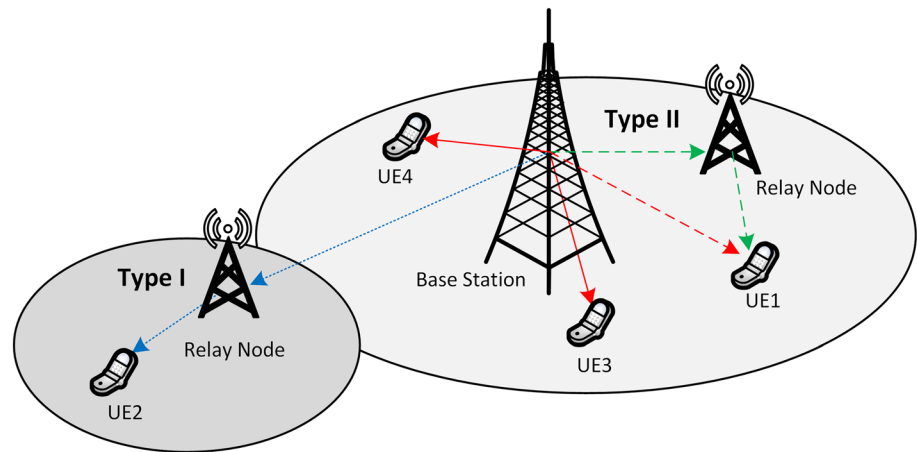
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Fig. 1 Relay application: **I** coverage extension, **II** diversity improvement



It can also help to reduce network complexity and provide high QoS by decreasing end-to-end latency [27]. The high-frequency mm-wave bands are considered as an ideal spot for 5G as there is a vast spectrum is still untapped which can provide greater bandwidth [28, 29]. However, in the high-frequency ultra-dense network, the range of transmission is getting shorter due to the smaller wavelength and various intra-cell interferences from nearby devices [30]. Meanwhile, in the wireless urban area network, users suffer more scattering issues due to large number of obstacle present in a small area. [31, 32]. Furthermore, the user equipment's (UEs) located at the edge of the cell received weak signals as compared to the minimum desired signal level requires for communication. In such situation, deploying a small Base Station (BS) within a cell to boost the signal strength is not considered as a viable solution [33, 34], since, it can increase inter-cell interference (ICI), which requires more complex Coordinated Scheduling (CS) algorithm with incurring unnecessary costs [35]. In order to address such issues, a highly feasible solution is proposed; which deploys an infrastructure-based transceiver within a cell to create a multiple-hop communication network [36]. These transceivers act as RN in order to serve mobile users with higher efficiency and low cost [37]. This solution is the key advancement to address increasing demand and deliver effective (I) coverage extensions and (II) diversity improvement as shown in Fig. 1 [38, 39]. It can provide better spectrum diversity and higher user throughput by selecting suitable Modulation and Coding Schemes (MCS) [40]. The fundamental principle of deploying RNs is to receive the information from the BS and deliver it to the UE (or vice versa) while increasing the quality of signal without having a prominent loss of the information [41, 42]. In order words, higher level of improvement in diversity can be achieved by deploying several RNs in the cell coverage area with massive achievable users data rates [43, 44].

Extensive fundamental changes are expected in the local user's demand for 5G networks. However, it is not feasible to restructure the entire network each time it gets clogged up with traffic, therefore, a more realistic approach is to adopt as a reconfigurable solution [45]. Moreover, the data demand for user plane (UP) and control plane (CP) in the 5G network will likely grow at different speeds, resulting in an independently scalable solution and user's demands will increase alongside user's intolerance to underperforming applications [46]. For optimal performance, 5G networks will adopt a more coordinated approach to radio access network (RAN) technology based on CoMP transmission and Inter-cell Interference Coordination (ICIC) as already demonstrated in the recent release-15 systems [47]. It stated that a single UE can be served by multiple BS of different backhaul technologies in a coordinated manner with less interference [48].

2 Contribution

The future generation wireless systems, such as 5G and beyond are expected to implement an interference efficient mechanism for more reliable communications. The current communication system faces various technical challenges like user's mobility, unexpected channel variation, coordinated BS identification, shared spectrum communication, and intra-cell & inter-cell interference. For reliable multi-tier communication cellular networks, an extensive investigation has been undertaken in the area of interference management. Moreover, with the steady rise of number of devices, these interference issues become more intense causing severe degradation in overall network performance. Therefore, this paper studies the issues related to interference management from the perspective of Heterogeneous Network (Het-Net) and D2D network, by using enabling techniques such as ICIC, CoMP and CS (as shown in Fig. 2). The future

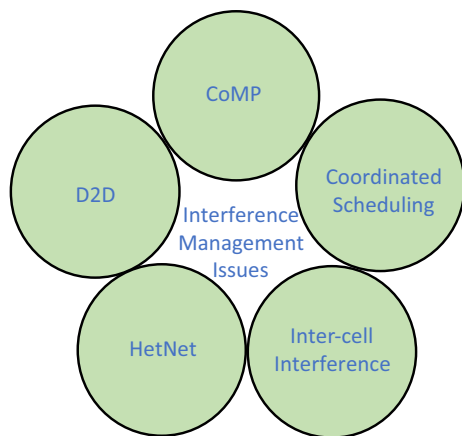


Fig. 2 5G interference management issues

research challenges and few proposed 3GPP schemes to mitigate interferences are also discussed in this paper.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. Section 3 discusses the existing interference management issues along with current research conducted to address them. Section 4 explains the research challenges for mitigating the interferences. Section 5 shows some of the proposed methodologies by 3GPP. Section 6 ends with the conclusion.

3 Interference management

3.1 Inter-cell interference (ICI) issues

In a multi-cell cellular environment, especially in full frequency reuse scenarios, one of the major challenges to contend is the issue of ICI mitigation [49]. ICI can easily degrade the system's spectral efficiency (SE) and energy efficiency (EE) especially for the cell edges users [50]. The SE is defined as the measurement of how efficiently the available spectrum is utilized in the system, while the EE is the measurement of efficient energy consumption in the system [51]. In order to improve SE and EE gains across the cells, numerous mitigation schemes either based on dynamic or static resource allocation approaches can be used [52]. However, some of these techniques do not always perform optimal as expected and tend to shorten the available bandwidth of the BS resulting in SE loss. For an efficient system design in a multi-cell cellular network, the trade-off information between SE and EE is significant [53, 54]. However, interference cancellation can be implicitly achieved in practice by removing or spacing out the strongest interferers or by increasing the separation distance between BSs. It can be an effective approach to minimize ICI which can help to achieve higher signal gain than the threshold value [55]. In order to mitigate interferences efficiently, various schemes

such as cooperative transmission, resource partitioning, beamforming, and interference alignment (IA) have been proposed and tested in numerous literatures [56–61]. Each of these schemes has its own effective gain and coordination requirements. Some advanced solutions for minimizing ICI in the latest researches are explained in the following subsections.

The authors in [62] are focusing on mitigating ICI for multiple-input-single-output (MISO) channel. Cooperative beamforming scheme which is based on resource allocation and beam selection is used to achieve significant results for higher cluster size. In [63] the authors have focused on reducing the indoor environment ICI by using a network concept stated as a virtual cellular network. They suggested that the virtual cell is needed to be designed in groups for user distribution. Their results have proved that the proposed approach reduced ICI with improved spectral efficiency. Moreover, in order to achieve efficient energy consumption with a minimum interference effect, a study in [64] proposes an energy-efficient framework for high-density cells network. This technique dynamically allocates the spectral resources fairly among users, while keeping the BS into the sleep mode. It delivers more energy efficient results as compared to existing 'interference control only' and 'sleep mode only' schemes. Moreover, mitigating the effect of ICI for adjacent cells especially for cell edge users is studied in [65]. The proposed approach is based on 'Opposite codeword order' and 'Bayesian division classifier' theory used for ordering the division for each codeword. The results show that the proposed scheme delivers better performance for cell-edge communication. Another study to enhance the QoS for self-organized HetNet is discussed in [66]. It proposes a new approach which is based on game theory that optimized cell time transmission muting. It helps to deliver better QoS ensuring more users have a similar level of satisfaction.

3.2 Heterogeneous networks (HetNets)

The concurrent operation of macro-, micro-, pico- and femto-cells are stated as HetNet. Interference management is one of the most critical challenges due to the uncoordinated nature of HetNet deployments. In traditional HetNet configurations, a handover margin power offset is introduced between macro BSs (MBS) and pico BSs (PBS) or between MBS and other lower power BSs. It helps to achieve maximum offloading and extend the coverage area of low power BSs beyond their original coverage limit [67]. However, in this context, UEs at the cell edges under the coverage area of lower power BSs are heavily interfered by macro-cell downlink transmissions and faces serious ICI which causes lower UEs performance [68]. Minimizing the ICI in order to improve users performance at the cell edge is critical in a single frequency network as coordination between adjacent

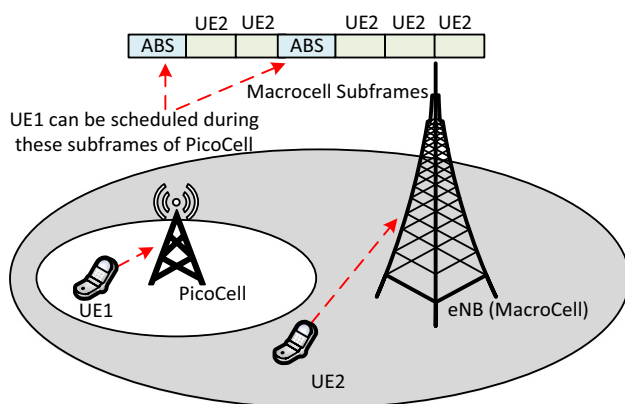


Fig. 3 Almost blank subframe technique for HetNet

BSs is always difficult to manage [69]. Inter-cell coordination technique such as the ICIC is initially introduced as a solution to ICI in multi-cell networks [70]. ICI technique can be categorized as either static coordination such as ICIC or as dynamic coordination such as the enhanced ICIC (eICIC).

In the ICIC technique, the MBS transmits and receives the network management information, such as transmit power, cell load, interference level, and resource allocation information through their high-speed backhaul (X2) interfaces. It helps to jointly coordinate the transmitted power and resources assignments for both cell-center and cell-edge UEs [71]. Whereas, the enhanced version of ICIC, also known as eICIC technique, is introduced by 3GPP to minimize the complex coordination overhead experienced in ICIC standard [72]. The eICIC scheme requires as minimum coordination as possible between two cells. However, in order to maximize the utilization of spectrum resources in time division based multi-cell networks, a single frequency network is commonly deployed [73]. In the eICIC scenario, the multi-cell can function as single-cell where the complete feedback information is available. In other words, multiple BSs can jointly transmit and receive statistics to optimal performance [74]. The eICIC introduces a technique called almost blank subframe (ABS) (as shown in Fig. 3), for macro-cell downlink sub-frame. It helps to suppress the interference of UEs within the coverage of lower power BSs overlaid by MBS [75]. As the name implies (ABS), the MBS does not transmit any data and control signal in some subframes in order to allow lower power BSs to synchronize with UEs in that sub-frames [76]. This principle might lead to loss of some resources, however, it surely improves the performance of the lower power BSs, thus, from the system-wide assessment, the overall achieved gain is enhanced [77, 78]. Furthermore, Time Division Duplexing (TDD) is a well-known synchronized technique for next generation of 5G heterogeneous multi-cell networks. As 5G is widely expected to operate in a massive MIMO antenna scheme,

TDD helps to perform duplexing in order to achieve optimal system performance [79]. Few of the latest researches conducted to mitigate the interference in the HetNets are discussed below.

A study in [80] is based on ICIC which utilizes soft frequency reuse method for relay based cellular network. The results show that the proposed approach delivers better cell-edge users' performance with efficient and fair resource sharing among users. Another resource allocation scheme using soft frequency reuse is presented for ICIC in [81]. This approach efficiently utilizes the spectrum for cell-edge users that helps to deliver higher throughput for both uplink and downlink network. Another ICIC power scheme is proposed in [82] for the uplink network. It is a transmission power control-based ICI technique, where interference effect is the same for fractional frequency reuse method. The results prove that user throughput is increased as compared to the conventional method. It also suggested that a more realistic traffic model need to be investigated in the future in order to achieve higher overall users' performance.

An interference aware slot allocation technique to improve pico-cell/macro-cell performance is proposed in [83]. It is an eICIC technique based on ABS, which utilizes an unused spectrum and delivers better spectral efficiency as compared to the current fixed ABS ratio approach. Another eICIC scheme for unevenly distributed users is discussed in [84]. The authors proposed a dynamic load balancing algorithm for non-homogenous users' distribution among cells without any additional signaling message. The results give better performance in terms of bandwidth and packet delay as compared to the conventional ICIC approach. Another eICIC scheme is proposed in [85] for small cells network which coordinated the BSs by horizontal beamforming technique for ultra-dense high-rise building environment. The authors prove that the proposed technique helps to increase throughput, however, it requires a highly precise codebook-based precoding algorithm at the antenna side. Another approach that utilizes soft frequency reuse method is discussed in [86]. The study highlighted some of the various issues such as power ratio and traffic loads. The results show that the proposed approach enhances the user's performance in terms of signal-to-interference-plus-noise ratio (SINR), block error rate and throughput.

The research in [87] studies the interference coordination scheme for multi-tier HetNets that utilizes the ABS based semi-distributed algorithm with limited signaling overhead. The results proved that the proposed algorithm improves sum throughput with acceptable fairness among users. Another approach in [88], discusses the joint interference management and cell association technique for HetNet. The reinforcement learning approach is used, which focuses on time and frequency domain interference technique to increase achievable gain. Results show that the proposed

approach gives better performance as compared to fixed cell range expansion and fixed ABS techniques. Although, this technique is limited for less RBs sharing which required a more complex algorithm to achieve higher bandwidth. Another eICIC scheme for femtocell in HetNet is studied in [89], which is based on suppressing the interference while effecting the physical downlink control channels (PDCCHs) by blanking two orthogonal frequency-division multiplexing (OFDM) symbols. The approach is backward compatible which can support Long Term Evolution-Advanced (LTE-A) frequency division duplex (FDD) and TDD system. However, its performance is degraded on a single time slot when interference from the same frequency signal is received. Another interference mitigating scheme for arbitrary fading channel has been studied in [90] that estimates the SINR and obtain moment generating function (MFG) for heterogenous Poisson fields of the transmitter and interferes. Its results prove that the SINR statistics deliver better performance in terms of Mittag–Leffler’s function. Another interference mitigation approach for low Signal to Noise Ratio (SNR) region is proposed in [91]. In this method, the IA scheme is optimized by the weighted minimum mean square error (W-MMSE). The results give less iteration and better capacity even on low SNR region, although it requires high channel state information (CSI) for precoding the transmission signals.

Moreover, a study based on software-defined networking (SDN) architecture for HetNet is discussed in [92]. It utilizes eICIC and CoMP for SDN/RAN system, based on Monte-Carlo simulation. The results of fairness and capacity are improved for cell-edge users however, it requires stronger and highly capacitive backhaul network. Another approach for uplink interference model for both macro-cell and small cell users is discussed in [93]. In this model, the interference is characterized by both closed subscriber group (CSG) and open subscriber group (OSG). The results achieved high success probability with better average rate for both theoretical and simulation results. Another study is proposed in [94] for moving small cell of HetNets. The simulation was performed using continuous interference cancellation technique for the mobility of small cell. The results proved that this approach can help to improve the cell edge user’s performance as well as overall network performance.

3.3 Device to device (D2D)

The higher data rate, low latency, enhanced capacity, and better QoS for the future wireless networks are requisites of new applications [95]. In this regard, 3GPP introduced a new technology named as D2D communication, where users can now choose to communicate with each other over multiple interfaces in the same shared access network [96]. It is a radio access technology which provides users to

communicate among them in small proximity, without the need for transferring data through the network infrastructure. For instance, a D2D enabled device has the options for either long-range communications using WLAN, WiMAX, LTE-A, etc., or for short range communication using the Bluetooth or other proximity services (ProSe) protocols [97]. In typical D2D communication, data exchanges are usually via the Bluetooth or Wi-Fi short-range transmission protocols [98]. However, these network protocols are constrained by low transmission capacities as compare to LTE-A, WLAN, or WiMAX network protocols. Recent investigations on D2D and cellular convergence networks reveal that the unlicensed spectrum of LTE-A cellular networks can be shared by D2D users in similar access level within the same network [99, 100]. Hence, D2D can be used to ease the transmission overhead at the access network in order to improve the performance of core network of the cellular system [101]. Setting up D2D networks can be a smart way to maximize the scarce spectrum resources whereby the unlicensed spectrum are utilized through a coordinated radio resource (CRR) management [102, 103]. CRR is the key solution to avoid the issue of high ICI in D2D enabled cellular network. Interference often encountered between various D2D adjacent networks and between D2D and cellular networks due to user’s mobility and D2D network boundary ambiguity [104]. Similarly, the overall mobile network system capacity can be significantly improved by deploying a wide range of spectrum bands to serve individual D2D networks (Fig. 4) [105]. D2D network will play a key role in the upcoming 5G network in terms of improved latency, spectrum efficiency, power efficiency, network capacity enlargement and network coverage extension [106–108]. However, an efficient interference mitigation scheme is required to enhance the overall network performance [109]. Few of the related approaches are discussed below for handling interference for D2D communication.

An Interference cancellation approach in [110] investigates the outage performance of D2D users which uses beamforming and IC technique with M-antenna BS two-way decode-and-forward RN. The results confirmed that the closed form exact expressions give high SNR approximation for the outage probability. An Interference-bounded resource allocation heuristic scheme is proposed in [111], which estimates the interference thresholds set by BS and cellular users. The achievable system throughput for the proposed scheme is near to optimal sum-rate value while reducing the interference between D2D and cellular users. In order to solve the optimization problem and increase the overall rate of the cellular and D2D users, an approach in [112] is proposed. It designed a precoder (zero-forcing beamforming) method with the D2D pair association vector search algorithm that can deliver better performance in terms of sum rate as compared to the conventional approach.

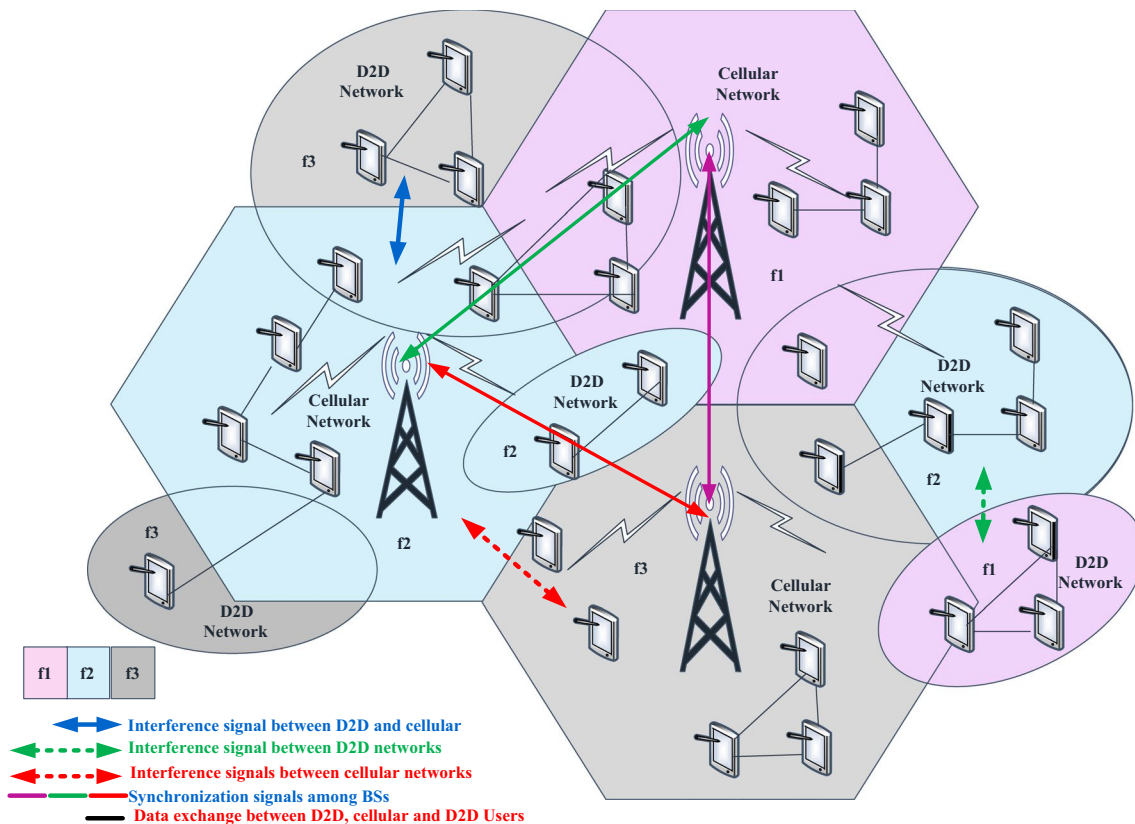


Fig. 4 Interference and spectrum reuse within a converged cellular and D2D networks

The mutual interference between cellular and D2D networks is resolved by the proposed scheme presented in [113]. An efficient power control scheme is designed to obtain the upper bound of D2D transmit power. Moreover, a controlling interference scheme is proposed for the cellular user to the D2D receiver with improved distance-based resource allocation scheme. The results show that the performance of D2D users improves significantly without degrading the performance of the cellular users. Another interference scheme for D2D MIMO HetNet is proposed in [114]. This scheme jointly designs precoder and receive filters for co-tier and inter-tier interference which required lower CSI. It proposes an IA scheme assisted by D2D (DaIA), which outperforms the conventional interference mitigation schemes. An approach in [115] proposed two interference mitigation scheme. First ‘interference-free’ scheme, which is based on the alignment of orthogonal space for BSs. Second ‘interference-limiting’ scheme, that works on peak interference power link at the certain threshold value. The results prove that interferences are well controlled with the acceptable QoS however, it is valid only for a limited number of D2D users in a cell.

The scheme proposed for ‘ η ’ interference avoidance [116] gives the idea of reusing the uplink resource for a hybrid

system of cellular and D2D network. The two proposed schemes are i) interference tracing approach and ii) tolerable interference broadcasting approach. Both schemes are independent and have efficient resource utilization performance. Another approach for D2D underlaid MIMO cellular networks from a new interference-aware perspective is proposed in [117]. The authors designed an interference-free network by adopting the degree of freedom (DoFs) as mode selection criteria with liner interference scheme. The results show that it can achieve high SNR with less interference for large MIMO based small-cell networks. An approach in [118] works on reducing the interference caused during resource sharing among D2D and cellular users. It proposed a power control algorithm to obtain the powers of cellular and D2D users in closed form while considering minimum SINR requirements. The results show that it helps to achieve higher sum rate with acceptable power optimization scheme. Another scheme of resource sharing and interference management for D2D and cellular user is proposed in [119]. This scheme is based on a greedy algorithm and successive interference cancellation (SIC) which gives strengthen resource utilization and higher total cell throughput with better performance gain.

3.4 Coordinated multipoint (CoMP)

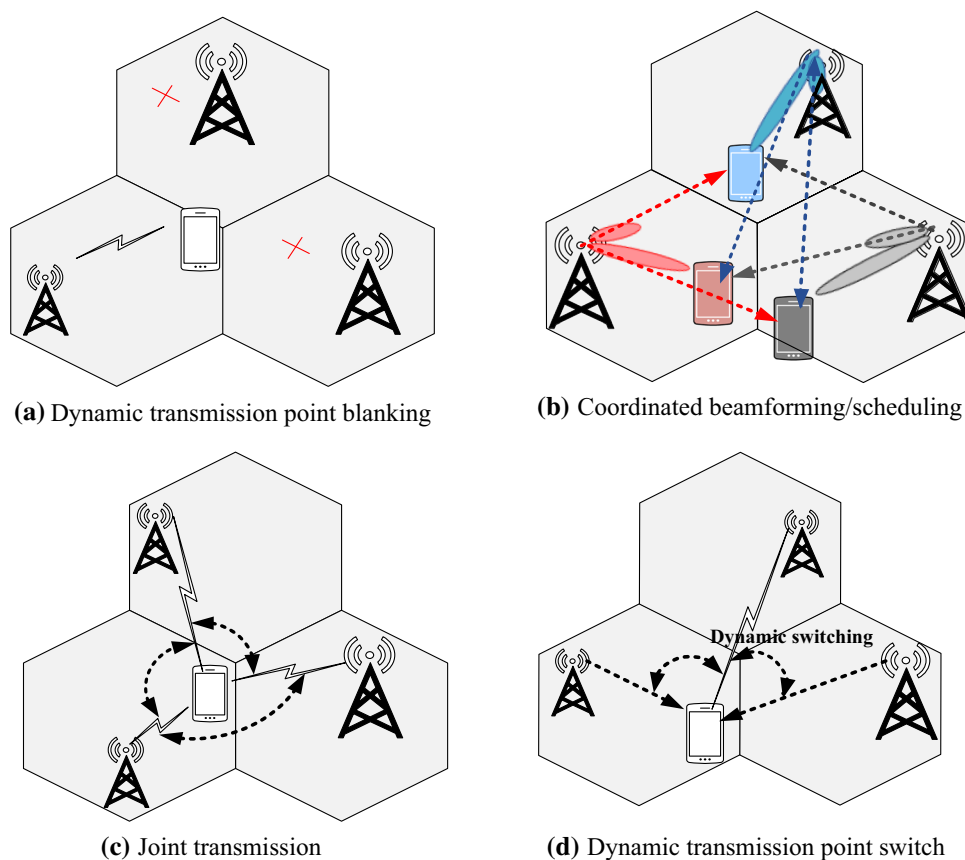
CoMP is one of the most viable technique to control ICI in the wireless networks especially for high density heterogeneous multi-cell networks [120]. CoMP is used for the management of co-channel interference (CCI) in a typical frequency reuse scenario, where multiple users are allowed to communicate using the same frequency channel [121]. This highly dynamic interference coordination scheme can be used to mitigate the interference between D2D and cellular transmissions in overlaid cellular networks [122]. It is predicted that CoMP schemes will set the platform for future converged network consisting of various interfaces where cellular networks and D2D communications will coexistence within the same frequency spectrum [123]. The next generation 5G wireless networks will leverage CoMP to maximize cellular coverage and increase the spectrum utilization efficiency [124, 125]. In CoMP systems, a number of co-located antennas interconnected through a high-speed X2 interface which are deployed at various transmission locations [126]. The essence of interconnecting co-located antennas through the X2 interface is to support the coordination of multiple cells transmissions, which helps to reduce the transmission delay and minimizes ICI [127]. The commonly deployed CoMP transmission schemes include CS or coordinated

beamforming (CB), and joint transmission or joint processing schemes.

In 3GPP Rel-13 and 14 for LTE-A, CoMP system is based on the concept of several transmission points at various geographic locations. It can cooperate to jointly transmit and receive data from common UEs in an interference avoidance mode [128]. The transmission points participating in joint transmission could be different remote radio units (RRU) and/or typical BSs [129]. CoMP system supports four types of downlink transmission [130], namely; (a) dynamic transmission point blanking as shown in Fig. 5a, in which the best transmission point is selected for data transmission to a targeted UE while blanking any potential high interference transmissions from other transmitters. (b) CS/CB as shown in Fig. 5b, where the beamforming or scheduling information is commonly shared among multiple coordinated transmission points to reduce interference. (c) Joint transmission as shown in Fig. 5c, where multiple transmission points jointly transmit data to a targeted UE. (d) Dynamic transmission point switching as shown in Fig. 5d, where the best transmission point is selected dynamically among various cooperated transmission points in order to transmit data to a targeted UE.

Apart from various advantages of all various CoMP coordination modes, CoMP still suffers from various

Fig. 5 Different CoMP modes



interference issues such as intra-cell and ICI, etc. [131]. Several researches have been conducted to deal with these interferences issues, where, some of the latest research for are discussed hereafter. Like an approach in [132] presented the methodology, which performs the experimental implementation of IA and CoMP. The proposed methodology utilizes orthogonal frequency-division multiplexing (OFDM) modulation with higher-order constellations which is based on high-performance low-density parity-check (LDPC) code. The results show that both IA and CoMP deliver improved performance for single-input and multiple-output (SIMO) as well as for MIMO case. Another interference mitigation scheme for time-asynchronous OFDM CoMP systems is proposed in [133]. It uses the geometrical and semi-analytical technique in Rayleigh fading channel for the uplink network which gives better average error probability results even for the high number of BSs. Another study for IA which focuses only LTE-A uplink path is presented [134]. It proposes three different dynamic information selection (DIS) techniques which are based on i) maximizing the sum-rate ii) minimizing the probability of outage iii) maximizing the minimum SINR value. Its results validate that it can increase the sum-rate while reducing the outage probability as compared to conventional UL CoMP system. Another Interference management scheme which utilizing frequency reuse method is proposed in [135]. This technique is based on hybrid dynamic frequency reuse (DMFR) method along with adaptive spectrum allocation and interference management schemes. The results prove that the proposed technique can enhance the cell-edge throughput as well as adjacent sector transmission performance.

An approach in [136] increases the capacity gain through the degree of freedom criterion. It proposes a local cooperation constraint methodology to deliver transmitted messages in an optimal way. The results conclude that the minimum number of receivers are beneficial for zero-forcing beamforming technique. In [137], a signal-to-leakage-plus-noise-ratio (SLNR) based cascaded interference alignment precoding scheme is presented. The orthogonal space of receiving matrix interference is estimated when SLNR precoding is used. It delivers better results in terms of bit error rate and system throughput. An application-based CoMP (ACoMP) scheme where each node is responsible to specify particular active application is proposed in [138]. This technique helps to reduce communication link among coordinated nodes which delivers better throughput, network capacity and packet loss ratio. Another IA based transceiver design algorithm for uplink CoMP is proposed in [139]. This technique uses the block QR decomposition (BQRD) method to resolve interferences among UEs. It utilizes the SIC technique to reduces the number of iterations which helps to improves the rate of convergence.

3.5 Coordinated scheduling (CS)

In a coordinated resource scheduling strategy, ICI is suppressed through user scheduling or user silencing [140]. In this scenario, a cell has the option to assign a resource (channel) to a user or to silence the user (i.e. to keep the channel unassigned) in order to avoid interference with adjacent cells. This can be carried out by assigning the beamforming vectors independently to different directions in each cell [141]. However, in synchronized beamforming system, the beamforming vectors at different BSs are coordinated in order to avoid interference uncertainty [142]. The CS/CB scheme requires only a minimal channel quality information for optimal scheduling decisions [143]. However, in a joint transmission, the co-channel user's statistics and CSI are simultaneously gathered from all cooperating cells and forwarded to the transmit antennas [144], which simultaneously process the signals using the antenna-array transmission scheme [145]. Precise scheduling can be possible when strong channel conditions are present, but in practical, availability of perfect CSI is always not possible [146]. To keep this in mind, many researchers are designing the scheduling algorithm which not only reduces the interference but also shares a fair spectrum among the users with limited availability of CSI [147–149]. Few of the latest work in the area of CS has been discussed hereafter.

A CS scheme which is based on channel estimation error (CEE) for uplink coordinated MIMO systems is presented in [150]. It outperforms the traditional CS algorithms in the practical scenario for CEE and also it gives better tradeoff between spectral efficiency and fairness. The scheduling restriction scheme for interference coordinated HetNet is presented in [151]. It utilizes the proportional fair resource allocation (PFRA) technique that is based on a scheduling restriction scheme. The results show that the minimal performance degradations with a better tradeoff between the performance and feedback reduction is achieved. Another approach based on joint CS and power optimization for cloud-enabled networks is proposed in [152]. It is a graph theoretical approach which introduces joint scheduling and power control graph technique designed for various clusters size. The clusters are formed by a set of vertices, representing the possible association of users, BSs, and power levels (PLs) for the specific power-zones (PZs). Its results prove that it achieved substantial performance improvement in comparison to the conventional method. Another approach in which a joint uplink user-scheduling, power control and beamforming algorithm are coordinated across multiple cells has been discussed in [153]. The main contribution of this paper is the recasting of the problem in terms of sum-of-ratio programming and a subsequent quadratic reformulation which allows scheduling and beamforming to be optimized through solving a matching problem. The results show that

the proposed approach significantly outperforms both the WMMSE algorithm and the existing uncoordinated scheduling approach.

In order to solve the maximum-weight independent set problem, a hybrid coordinated scheme for cloud-RAN is proposed in [154]. It is based on graph theory technique by constructing the conflict graph that gives a significant increase in signal-level coordination. Another uplink IA based CS (IACS) scheme, which combines the benefits of proportional fairness (PF) scheduling with interference scheduling is presented in [155]. The results show that the proposed scheme delivers better performance even in the high interference scenarios. Another approach for multicell interfering broadcast downlink networks with zero-forcing beamforming is presented in [156]. It consists of low-complexity multicell coordinated user scheduling policies which deliver less computational complexity with higher intercell coordination. The results prove the significant improvement in the system performance as compared to the conventional PF scheduling approach is achieved. Moreover, multi-cell interference coordinated scheduling scheme for urban Non line-of-sight (NLOS) mm-wave cellular system is proposed in [157]. It is a mac layer-based design approach that allows cooperation between adjacent BSs. It works on orthogonality concept that is used in spatial-time domain resource allocation. The results show that it maintains high spatial reuse features of mm-wave signal and also increases fairness among users. Another approach for sub-optimal performance of joint user with beam scheduling is proposed in [158]. It is based on a genetic algorithm that gives better performance as compared to the conventional greedy algorithm.

4 Research challenges

4.1 Inter-cell interference (ICI) issues

ICI is one of the critical issues for cellular communication due to the use of same frequency band in neighboring cells. This issue needs to be mitigated without the loss of any user's information especially for the future wireless 5G network which will be more compact and will consist of highly dense communicating devices. In order to fully realize this in practice, different interference management schemes can be used. Schemes such as cooperative transmission, resource partitioning, beamforming, and IA can be implemented for the more complex cooperative network which suffers from high ICI issues [159].

4.2 Heterogeneous networks (HetNet)

Due to the presence of various small cells such as pico and femtocell, HetNet suffers from the higher ICI issue. These

interferences can be resolved by using various time and frequency division techniques. The most common technique is the ICIC and eICIC scheme which uses IA to minimize the volume of network control traffic and cooperation. It allows only information related to channel state where each end user is associated with only one BS. However, IA is not always efficient because of time variations and imperfect channel conditions. To exploit the potentials of IA, it is advisable to design it with the limited feedback, but at the expense of a limited DoFs. The utilization of the ABS approach is also an efficient approach; however, it requires higher CSI value. Moreover, some researches should be conducted for the FDD and TDD approaches which can help to deliver better results even when the interference is very high. This is very critical because the next generation of 5G heterogeneous multi-cell networks is widely expected to operate in TDD mode using massive MIMO antenna scheme for optimal system performance [160].

4.3 Device to device (D2D)

The fundamental challenges in D2D network arises when D2D is converged with the cellular network that is communicating within the same frequency channel. One way to achieve this is to reduce the transmission power of users within the confinement of the D2D region of the network, rather than, reducing the transmission power of cellular systems. However, this is not always an efficient approach to handle since it can reduce the overall network performance. More advance SIC or stochastic geometry-based approaches are needed, which has the tendency to create an imbalance between downlink and uplink coverage with high spectrum efficiency for D2D enabled cellular network [161].

4.4 Coordinated multipoint (CoMP)

In order to mitigate interference issues, CoMP provides various different solutions with better overall network performance. Few of the researches are working on synchronize cooperation techniques, whereas, some proposed A-synchronize cooperation techniques. Moreover, some use the frequency reuse method along with an efficient beamforming techniques. In uplink CoMP, multiple coordinated BS can facilitate a single targeted UEs where they can achieve high network performance by using joint processing technique. In TDD system, the overall system performance can be significantly improved by utilizing various channel reciprocity properties due to less computational complexity with low feedback overhead [162].

4.5 Coordinated scheduling (CS)

Several issues have been augmented when resource scheduling takes place such as complexity and fairness among users. An optimum resource sharing can be achieved by using various methodologies that can be based on priority of users or/and channel availability. In order to avoid interference for a particular user, the shared beam pattern information between two facing sectors of the cell can be used which can help to reduce the interference coming from adjacent cells. Moreover, some scheduling algorithms with efficient advancement are working on maximum largest weighted delay first (MLWDF), exponential/proportional fair (EXP/PF) and time-fair selective scheduling (TFS) schemes [163].

5 Proposed methodologies by 3GPP

As discussed, there are several works has been conducted recently and still various new approaches are in progress to mitigate interferences. Researchers and industries are working along with 3GPP to fulfill the expected demands for the future network. The 3GPP has recently presented various schemes and techniques in order to mitigate interference which are under consideration for the development of future wireless network.

5.1 Wireless backhauling

Dense deployment of small cells over a traditional macro-cell is considered as a key enabling methodology for the emerging 5G ultra-dense HetNets [164]. Various backhaul solutions have been proposed as higher number of access nodes retains more challenges for the deployment and management of the network. The use of wireless backhauls (where a limited range of communication is required) can be useful with an efficient beamforming approach in order to minimize interference and increase spectrum efficiency [165].

5.2 BS identification

In a high-density HetNets, a BS should be aware, capable or connect to its neighboring BSs and all the users associated with these BSs. Information of interferer BS is very essential in order to deal with the ICI and performing handover decisions. However, identification, transmission and detection of an interferer BSs over an air interference is a challenging task, yet the variation in transmission power, BSs triggering and advance reference signal design can be used to mitigate this issue [166].

5.3 Rank calculation

Rank adoption defines the number of independent transmitted streams aimed to balance the tradeoff between multiple received signals at the receiver. It helps to increase the spatial gain and improve the interference resilience property. Several efficient methodologies have been proposed by 3GPP recently, which focuses on an interference-aware inter-cell rank coordination algorithm in order to reduce computational complexity. It also requires a rank selection algorithm which should be based on instant CSI for interference covariance matrix (ICM) [167].

5.4 Receiver designing

In order to deal with the interference efficiently, the 3GPP has proposed an interference suppression and rejection technique at the user side, however, it is limited to a single receiver antenna. The multipath interference degradation reception is the issue which can cause major signal attenuation in the 5G network [168]. The 3GPP stated that, for the reference receiver, Code Word Level Interference Cancellation (CW-IC) receiver can be used for intra-cell inter-user interference mitigation. Moreover, for multi-cell scenario, for both baseline and reference receivers, inter-cell interference suppression with Minimum Mean Square Error - Interference Rejection Combining (MMSE-IRC) methodologies are very useful [169, 170].

5.5 Reference signal

The designing of a reference signal is one of the critical issues to handle, as there is a continuous and unpredictable propagation channel condition for transmitting signal. It can help to differentiate between the information signal's BS and interference signal's BS. For the future 5G network, 3GPP suggested that there is no need of a specific reference signal, however, a new reference signal (named as Demodulation Reference Signal) has been introduced for both Time/Frequency downlink and uplink channels [171, 172].

5.6 Finding adjacent interference cell

In TDD communication of high-density HetNet, the effect of adjacent and remote interference is an essential task because the signal from various BSs can only be differentiated with respect to its received signal time window [173]. Therefore, 3GPP proposed that, when applying the interference cancellation technique, the effect of interference coming from remote BS effect is also under the consideration due to the impact of troposphere bending in transmission channel [174].

5.7 Control channel identification

Signaling and control channels identification are essential in order to control the mechanisms to conserve limited resources. The isolation between the common control channel (CCH) and the dedicated control channel (DCC) is crucial in order to decrease the probability of miss-detection between information and interference signals [175]. The proposed technique by 3GPP shows that the specified reference channel measurement should remain below the given threshold reference value in order to attain optimum performance [176].

6 Conclusion

For the future 5G wireless network, number of users will exponentially increase which makes the communication network an ultra-dense. Various high interference issues are arising such as ICI (which is caused due to signals coming from the adjacent sector of the same cell) and CCI which occurs because of the reuse of same frequency in the adjacent cells). Furthermore, enabling D2D communications over the cellular networks will give higher capacity enlargement, however, it has to deal with many interferences especially in the ultra-dense network. In this paper, we have discussed a range of interference management schemes for complex and highly dynamic wireless networks. Particularly, it is mentioned that interferences in high-density HetNets networks can be mitigated by using static or dynamic interference cancellation techniques along with efficient resource allocation schemes. The potential solutions of interference mitigation for HetNets and D2D networks have been critically reviewed by focusing on their methodologies, advantages and limitations along with the future work. Moreover, the future researches challenges and few of the proposed 3GPP schemes to mitigate interferences has also been discussed. As discussed, these dynamic interference mitigation schemes are qualified to be considered an evolutionary step towards the 5G networks. The review concluded that the interference can be decreased by applying more advance eICIC techniques with highly efficient fairness-based CS scheme.

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Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest The authors declare that they have no conflict interest.

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