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Cotton Leaf Disease Detection Using Transfer Learning

Prof. Kamala K[1*], Dr. Shashidar T M[2], Antharya K[3], Chaitra R G[4], Chintha Gunasree[5], D R Guru Priyanka[6]
[1]Assistant Professor, Department of CS&E, Acharya Institute of Technology Bangalore
[2]Professor, Department of CS&E, Acharya Institute of Technology Bangalore
[3-6]Department of CS&E, Acharya Institute of Technology Bangalore

Abstract: Cotton is a critical crop in the agricultural sector, contributing significantly to the global economy. However, its productivity is frequently hindered by diseases that affect the leaves. Early detection of these diseases is essential to minimize losses and ensure sustainability. This paper presents a solution using transfer learning to detect and classify cotton leaf diseases with high accuracy. The proposed system employs pre-trained models like Mobile Net, VGG16, and ResNet152V2, fine-tuned to a dataset of cotton leaf images. Results demonstrate an accuracy of up to 99.32% using Mobile Net, highlighting the system's effectiveness and feasibility for real-world applications.

Keywords: Cotton leaf disease, transfer learning, MobileNet, VGG16, ResNet152V2, machine learning, precision agriculture.

Research Paper

***Corresponding Author:**
Prof. Kamala K
Assistant Professor, Department of CS&E, Acharya Institute of Technology Bangalore

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I. INTRODUCTION

Cotton, often referred to as "White Gold," plays a vital role in agriculture and the textile industry. India is one of the top producers, contributing approximately 26% to global cotton production. However, diseases such as bacterial blight, curl virus, and fusarium wilt significantly impact yield and quality. Traditional disease detection methods are time- consuming and prone to human error, emphasizing the need for automated solutions. Leveraging advancements in transfer learning, this study proposes an efficient approach to detect cotton leaf diseases using pre-trained deep learning models.

In this context, cotton farming faces multiple challenges, including climatic changes and limited access to advanced technology in rural areas. Addressing these issues, the integration of machine learning-based solutions into agriculture has proven transformative, offering scalability, precision, and cost-effectiveness.

II. RELATED WORKS

A. Survey of Existing works

Plant disease detection using deep learning has been widely researched, with significant advancements made in recent years. Traditional approaches, including K-means clustering and Support Vector Machines (SVM), have been applied, but the performance of such models is often constrained by limited dataset sizes. Bhimte and Thool (2018) demonstrated the potential of SVM for disease detection; however, the results were suboptimal compared to modern convolutional neural networks (CNNs). Recent studies have utilized transfer learning models like MobileNet and VGG16, achieving higher accuracy by leveraging pre-trained weights. Despite these advancements, limited comparative studies exist that analyze the performance of newer, lightweight models such as EfficientNet and DenseNet in the context of cotton leaf disease detection. This paper aims to bridge this gap by presenting a comparative analysis of these models.

B. Research Gaps

A review of existing studies highlights several gaps in the current research landscape:

Lack of Comprehensive Dataset Descriptions: Many studies fail to provide detailed information regarding the datasets used for training and testing. This lack of clarity makes it challenging to evaluate the diversity and representativeness of the data, which may affect the generalizability of the models.

Inconsistency in Performance Metrics: There is a noticeable variation in the performance metrics reported across different studies. While some papers emphasize accuracy, others focus on precision, recall, or the ROC curve. This inconsistency complicates direct comparisons between methodologies.

Narrow Scope of Disease Detection: A significant portion of research focuses on detecting one or two cotton leaf diseases, with limited efforts directed toward developing models capable of identifying multiple diseases simultaneously.

Interpretation of Gaps:

More extensive research is needed to address specific disease detection for cotton plants using machine learning.

Employing a combination of performance metrics, including precision, recall, ROC curves, and confusion matrices, would provide a more holistic evaluation of model efficacy.

III. METHODOLOGY

The methodology outlines the step-by-step processes used in the system to conduct molecular docking simulations, starting from protein and ligand preparation to result analysis.

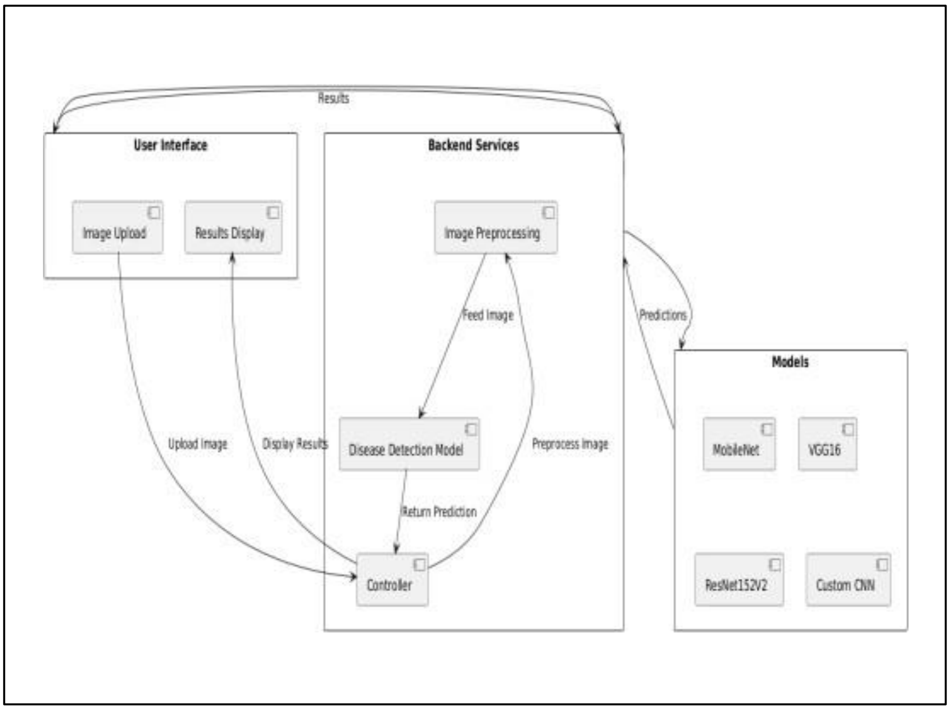

Fig. 1: System Architecture

A. Data Collection and Preprocessing

The dataset comprises 1711 images sourced from Kaggle, categorized into four classes: bacterial blight, curl virus, fusarium wilt, and healthy leaves. The dataset was split into 75% for training and 25% for validation. Preprocessing techniques included resizing, normalization, and data augmentation to improve model performance. Noise reduction techniques such as Gaussian smoothing were also employed. The augmentation methods, such as flipping, rotating, and color enhancement, ensured that the model was exposed to varied scenarios, improving its generalizability.

To ensure balanced representation, the dataset was stratified to contain an equal proportion of images from all four classes during training. This mitigated the risk of class imbalance, which could otherwise bias the model's predictions.

B. Transfer Learning Models

Three pre-trained models were fine-tuned for this task:

1. **MobileNet**: Known for its lightweight architecture, it achieved the highest accuracy (99.32%) with efficient resource utilization. Its depth-wise separable convolutions significantly reduce computational load, making it suitable for real-time applications. MobileNet's modular design allows for scalability, enabling further customization for specific agricultural applications.
2. **VGG16**: A robust deep learning model, providing an accuracy of 98.18%, with its deep architecture enabling hierarchical feature learning. The simplicity of its uniform layer structure makes it ideal for transfer learning tasks.
3. **ResNet152V2**: Leveraging residual connections to handle deep networks, it achieved 99.09% accuracy, excelling in scenarios requiring nuanced feature extraction. ResNet's capability to learn from both low-level and high-level features contributes to its superior performance on complex datasets.

Each model was trained with a categorical cross-entropy loss function and the Adam optimizer. The training process was monitored using early stopping to prevent overfitting, with batch normalization to enhance training stability.

C. *Model Training*

Each model was trained using a categorical cross-entropy loss function optimized with the Adam optimizer. Training involved fine-tuning pre-trained architectures like MobileNet, VGG16, and ResNet152V2 on a balanced and augmented dataset. Key measures such as early stopping were implemented to prevent overfitting, ensuring optimal generalization. Batch normalization layers were incorporated to maintain training stability and accelerate convergence. The training process leveraged GPU acceleration for faster iterations, allowing efficient handling of high-dimensional image data. Validation was performed iteratively, and hyperparameter tuning refined the models further to achieve the best performance on the test dataset.

D. *CNN Model*

In addition to transfer learning models, a custom Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) was developed as a benchmark. The architecture included convolutional layers with ReLU activation, max-pooling layers, and dense layers for classification. Despite achieving reasonable accuracy (92.27%), the custom model was outperformed by pre-trained models. The custom CNN emphasized local feature learning but lacked the hierarchical depth of pre-trained models.

E. *Model Evaluation*

Evaluation metrics such as accuracy, precision, recall, and Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) curves were employed to assess the performance of the models. Among the tested models, MobileNet consistently outperformed others with an accuracy of 99.32%, precision and recall both at 99%. These metrics highlight the robustness and reliability of MobileNet in classifying cotton leaf diseases across diverse datasets.

To ensure balanced evaluations, confusion matrices were utilized, providing insight into true positives, false positives, true negatives, and false negatives. The matrices revealed minimal misclassifications, indicating the models' ability to generalize well across unseen data.

Additionally, ROC curves were plotted to examine the trade-off between sensitivity and specificity across varying thresholds. MobileNet demonstrated a near-perfect area under the curve (AUC), further validating its efficacy for disease detection tasks.

Cross-validation techniques were employed to strengthen confidence in the models' reliability. By partitioning the dataset into multiple folds and iterating the training process, the evaluation provided comprehensive insights into the models' generalizability. This method reinforced MobileNet's robustness, with minimal performance variance observed across different folds.

Overall, the evaluation processes not only highlighted MobileNet's superiority but also ensured that the models were extensively tested under diverse conditions to ascertain their effectiveness for real-world deployment.

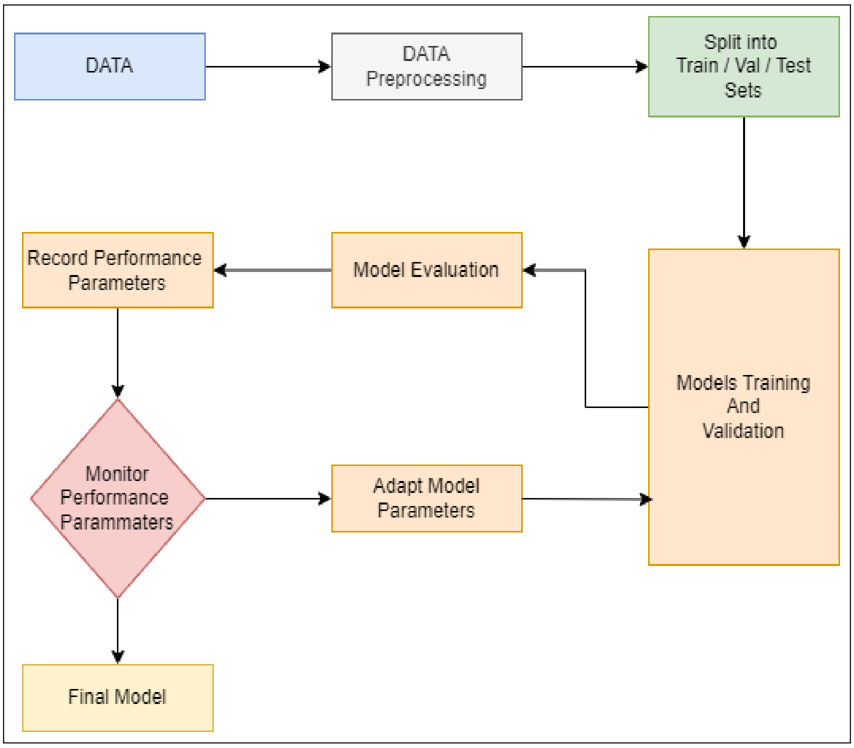

Fig. 2: Proposed Methodology

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Performance Metrics

Table I: Validation Results

MODEL	ACCURACY	PRECISION	RECALL
Custom CNN	99.32%	99.00%	99.00%
MobileNet	98.18%	98.00%	98.00%
VGG16	99.09%	99.00%	99.00%
ResNet152V2	92.27%	94.19%	92.00%

The ROC curves and confusion matrices corroborate these results, demonstrating high model precision and recall. MobileNet's lightweight design and performance make it ideal for deployment on resource-constrained devices such as smartphones. The ability to maintain high accuracy while reducing computational demands highlights the potential of MobileNet for large-scale agricultural use.

B. Deployment and User Accessibility

The system was deployed as a web application using a Model-View-Controller (MVC) architecture. Farmers can upload images via a user-friendly interface. The backend processes these images, classifies diseases, and provides recommendations. The application was optimized for low- bandwidth environments to ensure accessibility in rural areas.

To further enhance usability, the application was integrated with a multi-language support system, catering to farmers from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Additionally, the inclusion of a voice-guided interface simplifies interactions for users with limited technical proficiency.

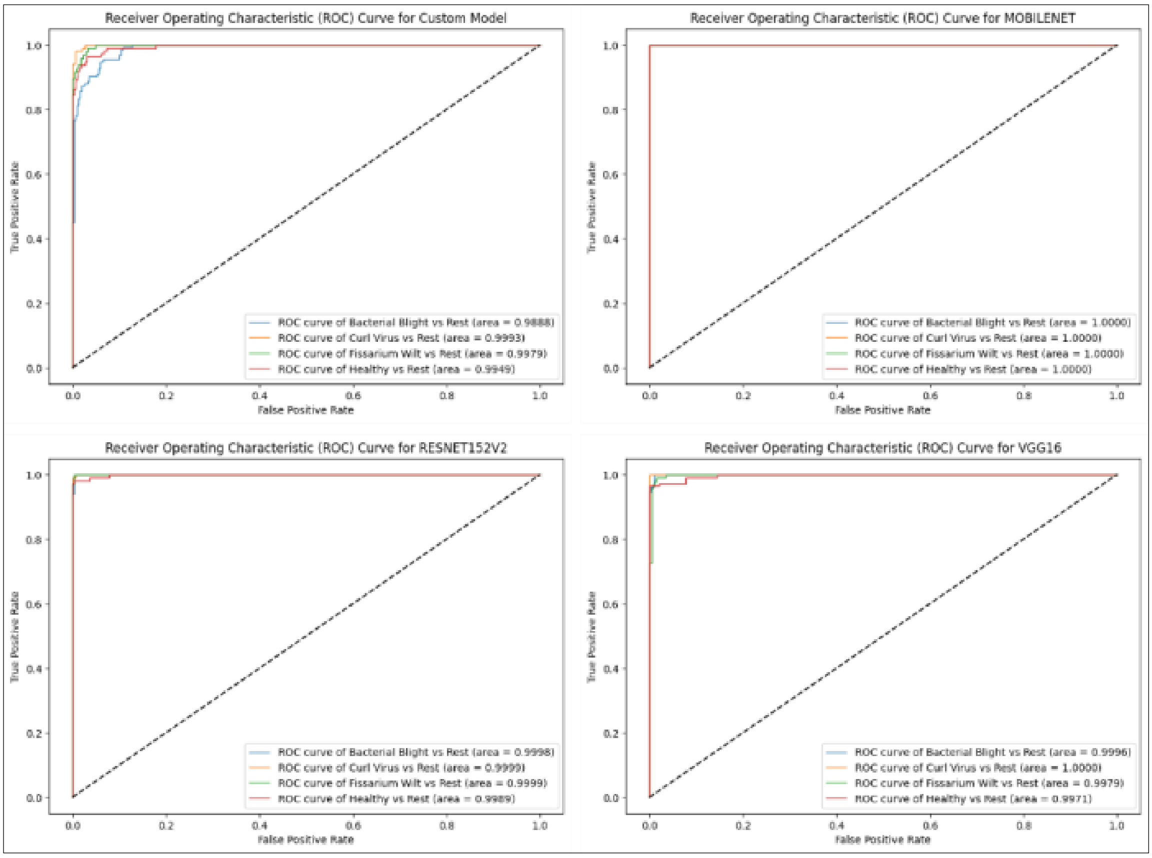

Fig. 3: ROC curves comparison

C. Practical Implications

The system's practical implications include timely disease detection, enabling farmers to take preemptive measures to protect their crops. The integration of disease-specific treatment suggestions ensures that the solution is actionable, bridging the gap between diagnostics and intervention. Moreover, by identifying disease trends at a regional level, policymakers can strategize preventive measures to mitigate widespread crop loss.

V. CONCLUSION

This study underscores the potential of transfer learning in advancing automated cotton leaf disease detection. The results reveal that MobileNet offers the best balance between accuracy and computational efficiency, making it a suitable choice for real-time deployment in agricultural settings. While models like ResNet50 and EfficientNet also demonstrated robust performance, MobileNet's lightweight architecture gives it an edge for mobile and edge applications. Future research could focus on expanding the dataset, incorporating more disease categories, and exploring ensemble learning techniques to further enhance model performance.

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