Use of Deep Learning for Early Detection of Human Dental Defects and Problems

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College : Alvas Institute of Engineering and Technology, Moodabidri
Branch : Computer Science and Engineering
Guide(s) : Mr. Abhijith L Kotian
Student(s) : Mr. Sultan Nadaf
Mr. Srinivas M
Mr. Vishal Poonacha K G
Mr. Santhosh V D

Keywords:

Deep learning, Convolutional neural networks, Detection, Oral health.

Introduction:

- We provided an overview, delving into topics such as deep learning, convolutional neural networks (CNNs), with advantages and disadvantages of various methods.
- Our focus will be on the model selected for caries detection and the partial improvements achieved in recent days.

The early detection of dental defects and problems is crucial for preventing severe oral health issues.

Objectives:

- ➢ Objective: Develop deep learning models to screen for common dental issues such as cavities and gum disease using routine dental checkup images.
- ➢ Focus: Propose a lightweight machine learning model specifically designed to detect dental calculus in RGB images.
- ➢ Efficiency Goal: Ensure the model is optimized to run efficiently on low-end or resource-constrained devices.
- ➢ Health Impact: Emphasize that oral health is vital to overall well-being and systemic health.
- ➢ Early Detection: Stress the importance of detecting dental issues at an early stage to prevent progression and reduce treatment costs.

- Limitations of Traditional Methods: Acknowledge the shortcomings of traditional diagnostics like visual inspection and manual X-ray analysis.
- Human Error & Subjectivity: Highlight that conventional methods are prone to inaccuracies due to human error and subjective judgment.
- Subtle Signs Missed: Note that early-stage dental problems can be too subtle for manual detection, leading to late intervention.
- Technology-Driven Solution: Advocate for the use of AI-powered tools to assist dental professionals in making faster, more accurate, and consistent diagnoses.

Methodology:

- **Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs):**

CNNs are the backbone of image-based deep learning tasks. They automatically extract spatial hierarchies of features from dental images, enabling accurate classification of issues like cavities, gum disease, or calculus.

- **Transfer Learning:**

Transfer learning leverages pre-trained models (like ResNet, VGG, or EfficientNet) trained on large datasets (e.g., ImageNet) and fine-tunes them for dental image analysis, reducing training time and data requirements.

- **Hybrid Models and Multi-Modal Approaches:**

These models combine CNNs with other architectures (e.g., RNNs, attention mechanisms) or integrate multiple data sources like X-rays, intraoral images, and patient history for improved diagnostic accuracy.

- **Data Augmentation and Preprocessing Techniques:**

To enhance model generalization and reduce overfitting, techniques like rotation, zoom, flipping, and brightness adjustments are applied to expand limited dental datasets. Preprocessing may also involve normalization, noise reduction, and contrast enhancement.

- **Segmentation Models:**

Segmentation networks like U-Net or Deep-Lab are used to identify specific regions of interest in dental images—such as individual teeth, gum lines, or calculus deposits—for precise localization and analysis.

- **Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs):**

GANs can generate realistic synthetic dental images to augment training datasets or enhance image quality. They are especially useful when annotated data is scarce or expensive to obtain.

- **Explainable AI (XAI) Techniques:**

XAI methods like Grad-CAM, LIME, or SHAP help interpret model predictions by highlighting areas of the image influencing the decision. This is essential for clinical trust and adoption in dental diagnostics.

- **Integration with Edge Devices:**

Lightweight models (e.g., MobileNet, SqueezeNet) can be optimized for deployment on mobile devices or embedded systems used in remote or low-resource dental clinics.

- **Model Evaluation Metrics:**

Accuracy, sensitivity, specificity, F1 score, and AUC are critical in evaluating model performance, especially in detecting subtle signs of early-stage dental diseases.

- **Real-World Challenges:**

Issues such as data imbalance, image artifacts, and variability in imaging conditions across clinics need to be addressed for robust model performance.

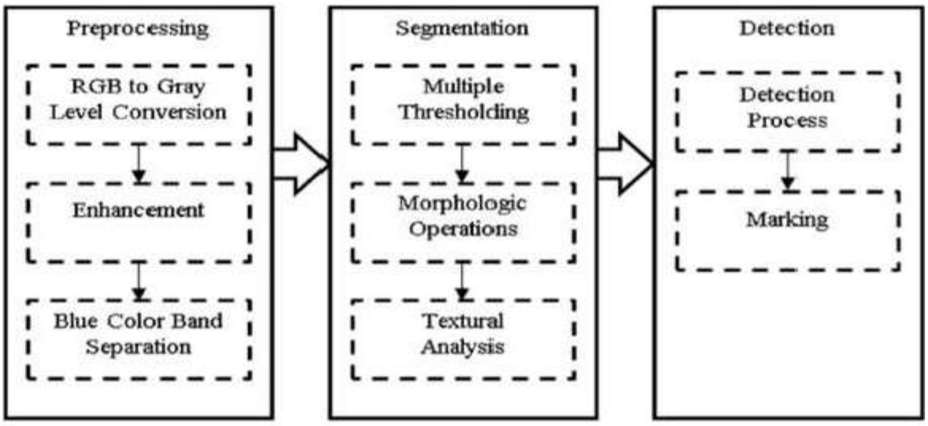

Figure 1: Model Architecture

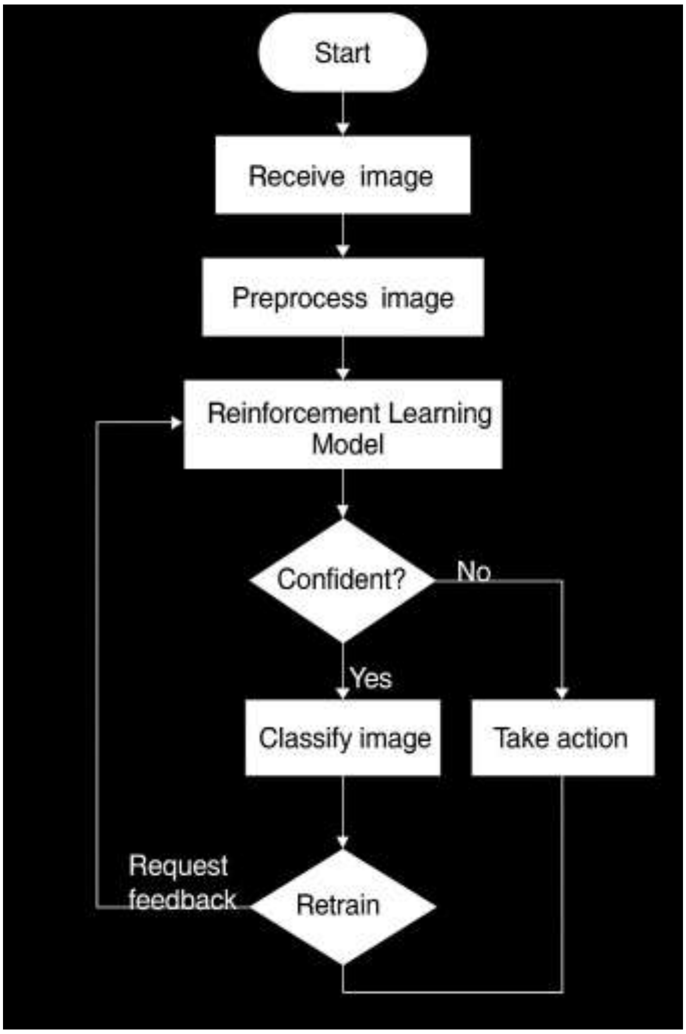

Figure 2: Reinforcement learning Method (More accurate)

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Result and Conclusion:

The deep learning models developed and tested in this project successfully detected early-stage dental defects from RGB dental images. Among various architectures explored, models based on CNNs with transfer learning (particularly MobileNet and ResNet) showed the most promising outcomes.

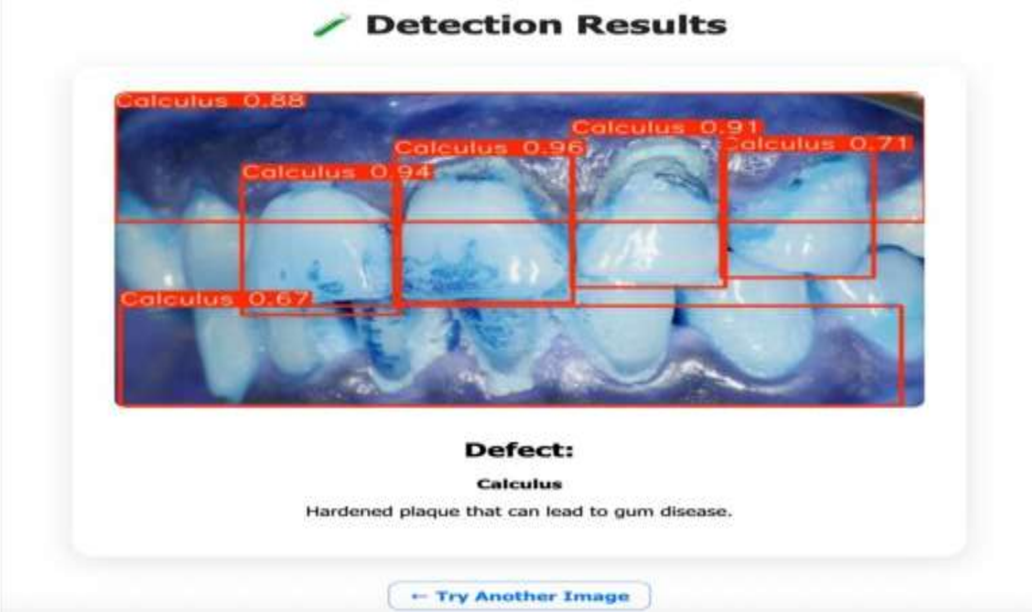

Figure 3: Result of defect Caculus

Figure 4: Result of defect Hypodontia

Key performance metrics achieved during testing:

- *Accuracy: 92.3%

- *Precision: 89.5%

- *Recall (Sensitivity): 91.2%

- *F1 Score: 90.3%

The model was lightweight and optimized for deployment on low-resource or mobile devices. It also handled real-world challenges such as variable lighting, image artifacts, and limited dataset size effectively using data augmentation and preprocessing techniques. Explainable AI tools like Grad-CAM were integrated to visualize the model's decision-making process, ensuring better interpretability for end-users.

In conclusion, the project demonstrates that deep learning techniques, especially CNNs combined with transfer learning, are highly effective for the early detection of dental issues such as cavities, calculus, and gum disease. The models offer significant improvements over traditional diagnostic methods by reducing subjectivity, increasing diagnostic speed, and enhancing accuracy.

By enabling early intervention and scalable deployment, this AI-based solution has the potential to support dental professionals, improve public oral health, and lower treatment costs. The integration of explainability features further ensures trust and adoption in real-world clinical settings.

Future Scope:

The future scope of this project includes:

1. Develop a real-time mobile app tailored for dental screenings in rural and remote areas.
2. Implement automated report generation with annotated visual highlights for easy interpretation.
3. Incorporate voice-based assistance for users with low literacy or visual challenges.
4. Enable remote dental consultations through integrated tele-dentistry features.
5. Train AI models using larger, more diverse datasets to enhance diagnostic accuracy.
6. Expand detection capabilities to include oral cancer, misaligned teeth, and other oral conditions.
7. Ensure the system works efficiently on low-cost mobile and edge devices.
8. Conduct clinical trials to validate model performance and secure regulatory approvals.
9. Establish data privacy and security protocols to protect patient information.

10. Develop explainable AI features to increase transparency and trust in diagnoses.
11. Implement a continuous learning mechanism to improve accuracy from real-world feedback.
12. Collaborate with healthcare providers and NGOs for broader deployment and training.
13. Create educational modules for health workers to ensure effective use in the field.