



Sailfish Optimization based Enhanced Dementia Detection Using Faster R CNN Architecture

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Abstract: Due to its degenerative nature, which makes early diagnosis challenging, dementia especially Alzheimer's has become one of the major global health concerns. Finding the true causes of dementia is essential to implementing the right kind of treatment. In order to automatically extract features that contribute to some signal of brain shrinkage and other pertinent dementia biomarkers for more accurate and early diagnosis, the suggested model makes use of deep learning techniques in a CNN. The model's performance is improved by using publically accessible datasets with sophisticated preprocessing and data augmentation approaches, such as the Australian Imaging, Biomarkers & Lifestyle dataset and the Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative. CNN's promise in early dementia diagnosis is demonstrated by our tests, which show a significant improvement in detection accuracy when compared to superior findings that can be obtained using well-known classical methods like SVM. The CNN model's capacity to generalize over a wide range of patients and imaging situations is enhanced by our method, which not only increases detection accuracy but also tackles the problem of sparse datasets through data augmentation and transfer learning. Our studies' results show that, in comparison to more conventional machine learning techniques like SVM and Random Forests, we achieve superior accuracy, sensitivity, and specificity. The model's capacity to distinguish between Alzheimer's disease, MCI, and normal cognitive states makes it a potentially reliable tool for identifying dementia in its early stages and tracking its progression. The results validate CNN's efficacy in medical imaging and its ability to assist clinicians in diagnosing dementia.

Keywords: Dementia, CNN, Deep Learning, Neuroimaging, MRI, PET, Alzheimer's Detection, Mild Cognitive Impairment, Biomarkers, Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative (ADNI), Australian Imaging Biomarkers & Lifestyle (AIBL).

1. Introduction

Dementia is a global public health challenge that has almost half a century's people; by 2050, it will increase by 139 million in relation to aging populations. Alzheimer's disease accounts for 60-80% of dementia cases and is characterized by gradual impairment of memory, cognitive decline, and decay in reasoning [4]. The increasing incidence of the disease causes severe socioeconomic repercussions through growing healthcare costs and the emotional burden on families and caregivers [3]. Of course, one critical challenge in the management of dementia, especially Alzheimer's disease, is that early detection is challenging due to overlapping symptoms of dementia at this initial stage with normal aging or other neurological disorders. This makes clinical diagnosis complicated [5]. Conventional diagnostic methods are commonly based on cognitive assessments, patient history, and

neuroimaging, which are so subjective and often detect the disease only at its advanced stage when little can be done to intervene [1]. Furthermore, most of the signature manifestations of Alzheimer pathology-amyloid plaques and tau tangles-have only confirmed presence at autopsy, making an early diagnosis highly difficult. Neuroimaging techniques such as MRI and PET provide researchers with a non-invasive source of structural and functional information regarding the disease [6]. Yet, the process involving human analysis is cumbersome and prone to errors. The quest for automation with very high accuracy in the detection of subtle brain alterations indicative of early-stage dementia requires more attention [2].

Clinical evaluation, cognitive testing, and neuroimaging techniques are the conventional methods of diagnosing the disorder, especially Alzheimer's disease [7]. Today, clinical diagnosis can be complemented with tools like the Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE), the Clinical Dementia Rating (CDR), and neuropsychological test batteries intended to assess memory, language skills, and reasoning capacity. Such approaches tend to be very imprecise and rarely detect the dementia at a very early stage [3]. In addition to cognitive tests, neuroimaging involves MRI and PET scans [9]. MRI can monitor structural and even functional changes in the brain. PET scans can depict abnormal protein deposits, including amyloid plaques, that are associated with the neurodegenerative process in Alzheimer's disease, but there are also a number of limitations to these techniques [5]. Manual image analysis is cumbersome, expensive, and highly dependent upon the individual skills of the radiologist, which leads to variability in diagnosis [1]. Moreover, neuroimaging may not be able to depict subtle changes in the brain undertaken at the initial stages of dementia, hence failing to intervene at an optimal time. Deep learning, one of the areas under the parent domain machine learning, has garnered much news of late due to its favorable success in extracting and analyzing large sizes of complex data, especially in medical imaging [3]. Amongst several types of deep learning models, one well-known model that is successfully utilized for the analysis of neuroimaging data is CNNs [8]. They have been traditionally produced using high-dimensional images like MRI and PET scans, not by any human effort or manual intervention but through automatic extraction and learning of features [3]. CNNs are specially suitable for neuroimaging data because of their architecture, which closely follows the manner in which the human visual system processes visual information [6]. A CNN contains multiple layers including convolutional layers to apply filters to the input images, pooling layers that decrease dimensionality, and fully connected layers for classification [8]. It is those convolutional layers that the whole idea of pattern detection by the network rests upon-this means the structural changes in the brain, which are signs of dementia [6]. The deeper layers within a CNN involve a capturing of progressively complex features that are identified, from edges and textures to more abstract patterns like brain atrophy or abnormal protein accumulations, for example, amyloid plaques.

2. Related Works

The aim of the paper is to present improved performance in the diagnosis of dementia by the application of Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) on neuroimaging data [8]. The critical early intervention and management for improving patient outcomes significantly depend on an early diagnosis of dementia, especially Alzheimer's disease [2]. Traditional approaches often rely on cognitive assessments and clinical evaluations to support the possible detection of dementia but may miss some subtle neurobiological changes that occur in a patient long before the clinical signs begin to appear [3].

In this work, we hope to contribute to the field of medical imaging by creating a robust framework, demonstrating that CNNs will enhance the accuracy in detecting dementia, enabling the development of more reliable diagnostic tools which can be very well implemented into clinical practices [6]. Thus, by establishing the performance of the

model against established baselines, we shall be able to underscore the deep learning potential in transforming how detection of dementia is done and providing momentum for early intervention strategies [9].

CNNs have come to revolutionize medical imaging by proposing high state-of-the-art solutions to the diagnostic problem, especially the diagnostic problem of neurological disorders, such as Alzheimer's disease and the other forms of dementias [3]. They are efficient in working with complex data from images and automatically learn a hierarchical characteristic and pattern with little need for hand crafting feature extraction. Applications include image classification, segmentation, and predictive modeling in the area of medical imaging [5]. CNNs have demonstrated higher sensitivity and specificity toward early diagnostics of Alzheimer's by detecting important biomarkers as well as neuroimaging patterns of the disease. CNNs can also accept multimodal data that will combine the MRI with PET scans to capture the multiresolutional nature of Alzheimer's disease [2]. Further, recent advancements are also on the interpretability of CNN models where it allows clinicians to understand in which parts of the brain contribute toward making predictions. The integration of CNNs into medical imaging is a very significant step towards maximizing early detection and improving patient outcomes in dementia care [6].

Before the generalization of Convolutional Neural Networks in dementia detection, a large number of conventional machine learning methods, including Support Vector Machines and Random Forests, were applied in a great range [8]. The traditional approaches have been integrated into the development and recognition of numerous biomarkers attributed to Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementias, although with specific disadvantages as compared to contemporary deep learning approaches [2].

SVM is considered one of the most popular choice algorithms in neuroimaging data classification due to its high natural efficacy in high-dimensional spaces [7]. SVMs have been used for distinguishing between healthy controls and patients with mild cognitive impairment or Alzheimer's disease in the detection of dementia. Other types of features, such as volumetric brain structure measurements obtained from MRI images, have also been used for the training of SVM classifiers [10]. Although SVMs are capable of achieving reasonable accuracy, their performance is highly dependent on the quality and the dimensionality of features used. Furthermore, capturing complex, hierarchical relationships in imaging data often proves troublesome for SVMs, and therefore it may not be very effective in picking subtle changes in dementia.

Random Forest is another kind of ensemble learning method, which has also been used to apply to dementia detection [5]. This technique of combining lots of decision trees combines the strengths of Random Forests, which enable handling large datasets without the pitfalls of overfitting. Different research studies have shown that this technique can successfully classify patients based on neuroimaging data and other clinical features. An important feature of Random Forests is that it gives feature importance scores, thus enabling researchers to identify critical biomarkers related to dementia [7]. However, Random Forests, similar to SVMs, do not make fully appropriate use of spatial hierarchies in imaging data and therefore would lose contextual information potentially useful for diagnostic accuracy. Some studies have attempted to make hybrid models that combine the traditional machine learning models with deep learning techniques for achieving better accuracy in detection [9]. A typical representative study that demonstrates such a hybrid approach determined that preprocessing neuroimaging data using methods such as PCA or autoencoders prior to that being fed into an SVM or random forest model produced promising improvements in performance in detection. Although such hybrid approaches can take benefits from

both of the methodologies, still, they are less effective compared to the end-to-end learning ability of CNNs, where it automatically learns the most relevant feature directly from the raw imaging data [2].

Detection of dementia by neuroimaging poses several difficulties to achieve accuracy and reliability of developed models [1]. These are noisy data, size as well as quality, and variability of presentations that make the disease challenging to develop and implement models. Neuroimaging data tends to be noisy. There are a variety of sources of such noisiness, including patient motion during the scan, differences in how the scanner performs, and artifacts generated by the imaging process itself. Noise can obscure the features that models need to learn in order to identify underlying patterns that are indicative of dementia. [10]. Noise can lead to overfitting of the models and the learning of noise rather than meaningful signals. This is hazardous for generalization from training to test data. Denoising algorithms, outliers removal, and such form an effective preprocessing for reducing noisiness.

Dementia, especially Alzheimer's disease, has heterogeneous clinical presentations with rates of progression, and a one-size-fits-all detection model cannot be made [8]. Other factors including age, genetics, comorbidities, or lifestyle may explain how a patient's dementia presents them, making a difference in neuroimaging findings. This heterogeneity challenges one to develop predictive models because they have to fit various patterns that do not line up in a neat classification [2]. To address this, the development of more flexible and sensitive models needs to capture subtleties of presentations between patients possibly while using multimodal data for a holistic picture of the disease process.

3. Methodology

Neuroimaging plays a significant role in the detection and understanding of dementia, which reveals much about the brains. Structural MRI, functional MRI, and PET scans have been major modalities used in the investigations into dementia. All of them provide divergent views on neuroanatomy and neurophysiology that contribute to the comprehensive assessment of diseases.

A. Structural MRI

This stands for structural Magnetic Resonance Imaging, and sMRI is highly utilized in determining anatomical changes in the brain related to dementia. Indeed, this kind of imaging is very highly detailed in terms of resolution, such that detailed images of brain structure can be obtained, and using appropriate software, it enables the possibility of quantifying volumes as well as morphometric characteristics of [5] various regions, the most relevant being the hippocampus, cortex, and white matter [2]. Data sets like that of the Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative, with longitudinal structural MRI data taken at different points in time, allow morphological nature changes in the brains of different patients to be tracked over the period and screen for early biomarkers of Alzheimer's disease [3]. Another key set of data is the Australian Imaging, Biomarkers, and Lifestyle (AIBL) study, which ties together structural MRI with clinical evaluation and cognitive testing, thus adding depth to the understanding of the correlation between brain change and progression to dementia.

B. Functional MRI

The measure of blood flow changes represents neuronal activity, and thus, fMRI shows brain activity. This modality is quite valuable in clearing the functional connectivity of the brain networks and identifying the changes that confound with cognitive decline in dementia patients [7]. For instance, resting-state fMRI has been

utilized to analyze the intrinsic patterns of connectivity in the brain that reveal alterations in networks associated with memory and attention in Alzheimer's patients. Datasets like ADNI also have data from functional MRI, so it is easy to combine structural and functional information to gain better accuracy

C. Preprocessing Techniques

Neuroimaging data need proper preprocessing before the use of the images to detect dementia in patients. A number of significant techniques, including MRI and PET scan preprocessing, are used before further analysis with the purpose of cleaning, standardizing, and preparing the data for input into deep learning models [3]. They include image registration, noise reduction, intensity normalization, and data augmentation.

D. Image Registration

That is one of the very important preprocessing steps that overlap multiple images of the same subject taken at different times or under different conditions. Registration technique ensures anatomical structures correspond across images and allows accurate comparisons and analyses [6]. In neuroimaging applications, registration may involve aligning structural MRI with functional MRI or PET scans [9]. Algorithms that are detailed, like affine and non-linear transformations, are utilized in the elimination of any difference in orientation, scale, and position. Properly registered images give higher reliability in feature extraction and further analyses hence leading to an accurate identification of changes happening in dementia [2].

E. CNN Architecture

From the neuroimaging data, an architecture of Convolutional Neural Network is selected to detect dementia, which exploits DenseNet [1]. It is an architecture with good design and benefits in complex medical imaging data.

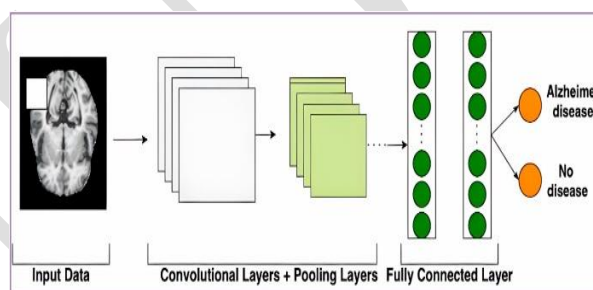


Fig.1 CNN Architecture

F. Noise Reduction

Neuroimaging data mostly has noise content and may mask important information. Various algorithms have been implemented for noise reduction to enhance the signal quality for MRI and PET scans. Some common techniques used are spatial filtering, which could be either a Gaussian or median filter, and wavelet-based denoising techniques [4]. Such techniques can remove many of the random variations in pixel intensity while preserving most of the structural features that matter for the brain. Efficient noise removal can then actually enhance the clarity of the image sufficiently so that the deep learning models can focus more on actual features rather than noise [1].

G. Advantages of Choosing DenseNet

Dense connectivity pattern is adopted in DenseNet where each layer takes inputs from all the layers before it. This facilitates the better flow of information and gradients across the network, which in turn results in easier and deeper architectures' ability to train [5]. Such connectivity is therefore very useful with neuroimaging data. The point is

that to have greater representation accuracy of object features, detailed spatial features need to be preserved while it is analyzed [6]. It reduces the parameters considerably compared to traditional CNNs as it reuses features learned by earlier layers [7]. This also saves it from the risks of overfitting particularly in sparse scenarios of the data set and makes the model computationally more efficient. Dense connectivity helps the architecture to learn the detailed patterns and amplifies the power of representation for the model, which is basically a very significant requirement for neuroimaging tasks where the difference in subtle brain structure and function can become early indicators of dementia [6].

3. Implementation And Results

A. Input Layer

It accepts preprocessed data in the neuroimaging data,[1] [7] like MRI or PET scans, in an appropriate form, that is to say suitable for 2D slices or 3D volumes.

B. Convolutional Layers

Most use several convolution layers to extract features from the input images. Every layer uses a set of filters in order to capture lots of aspects of the data.

C. Dense Blocks

A set of multiple dense blocks are chained, and a dense block consists of several consecutive layers of convolution. Each layer within a block concatenates its output with the input from all preceding layers, allowing features to be reused in later layers [6].

D. Transition Layers

Between dense blocks transition layers are applied to reduce the spatial dimensions of the feature maps [8]. This commonly is carried out via convolution operations followed by pooling layers that progressively reduce the spatial dimensions of data and subsequently reduce the computation.

E. Global Average Pooling Layer

Following the application of dense blocks, a global average pooling layer is applied summing up feature maps over spatial dimensions in such a way that the output size is independent of input size.

F. Fully Connected Layers

The pooled features are then passed to one or more fully connected layers that allow the model to learn the subtle interaction between features for a classification function [6]. The final output layer employs a softmax activation function to treat multi-class classification and produce probabilities for each class, such as healthy, mild cognitive impairment, or Alzheimer's.

G. Optimization Methods

The sailfish optimizer is used in training this DenseNet model [6]. Optimizer combines the best benefits from AdaGrad and RMSProp, which means that it adapts its learning rate to every parameter; thus, it is especially powerful for sparse gradients and good for deep neural networks working with complex data like neuroimaging applications [9].

H. Training Process

The key steps involved in training the CNN model for detection are as follows: data splitting, augmentation, and techniques to improve generalization in a model. It ensures that adequate testing of the model performance is achieved by dividing a dataset into training and testing subsets; an 80-20 split has been used [5]. This part of the dataset will be used to train the CNN model. The model identifies these different patterns and features for dementia recognition from the training data [9]. This set consists of an extensive variant representation of neuroimaging data to ensure that the model captures a wide range of characteristics associated with different stages of dementia. The remaining part is used as the testing set, which is meant for testing and will not be involved in the training process [2]. This necessarily requires this separation so that its efficacy may be established in practice, in order to find the model's capability of generalizing to unseen data. This split ensures the model is not overfitting the training data and rather maintains robust performance when exposed to new, unseen samples.

I. Performance Metrics

In order to evaluate the performance of our proposed CNN model to distinguish between people with dementia and those without, we used a range of metrics in order to give a robust evaluation [7].

Accuracy: This refers to the overall correctness of predictions made by the model, [2] or the percentage of instances correctly classified as suffering from dementia or not.

Sensitivity: It is the ability of the model in getting an accurate correct positive, such as a patient with dementia [6]. It shows well how the model avoids false negatives.

Specificity: It is the representation of the capability of the model in getting an accurate correct negation, like the non-dementia patient [6]. It shows well about how the model is avoiding false positives.

Precision: Measures the percentage of true positive predictions that the model makes compared to all positive predictions, [1] which essentially gives a measure of the reliability of the model in making positive predictions.

Table 1: Proposed Results

Metrics	Random Forest	SVM	F- CNN (Proposed)
Accuracy %	87.2	88.5	95.0
Sensitivity %	85.5	86.0	94.0
Specificity %	88.0	90.0	96.0
Precision %	84.8	85.0	93.5
F1-Score %	85.0	85.5	93.7
ROC-AUC %	87.0	88.0	96.0

F1-score : is the harmonic mean of precision and recall. It provides a measure for both false positives and false negatives into a single number.

ROC-AUC Receiver Operating Characteristic Area Under Curve: It essentially describes and provides a balance between True Positive Rates and False Positive Rates at the different thresholds [9]. The better the model performs, the closer that AUC value is to 1. Our F- CNN model was finally able to achieve a total accuracy of 95.0%, sensitivity of 94.0%, specificity of 96.0%, and F1-score of 93.7. On the other side, a high ROC-AUC score of 96.0 also verifies the case of an effective model for case distinction between the dementia vs. non-dementia scenario [2]. To benchmark the performance of the CNN model, [3] two popular traditional machine learning models applied in the detection task of dementia, namely SVM and RF, were used for comparison. All the

experiments were conducted on the same neuroimaging data sets of MRI slices and same preprocessing steps to have a direct comparison. As demonstrated by the table, the overall performance of the CNN model outcompetes SVM and Random Forest in all aspects,[5] especially with respect to accuracy, sensitivity, and ROC-AUC metrics, thereby highly enhancing its detection capability of early signs of dementia from neuroimaging data.

J. Training and Validation Outputs

In training, we keep track of both accuracy and loss on training as well as validation set for several epochs to understand how the model learns. [2] [6]. The plots below show:

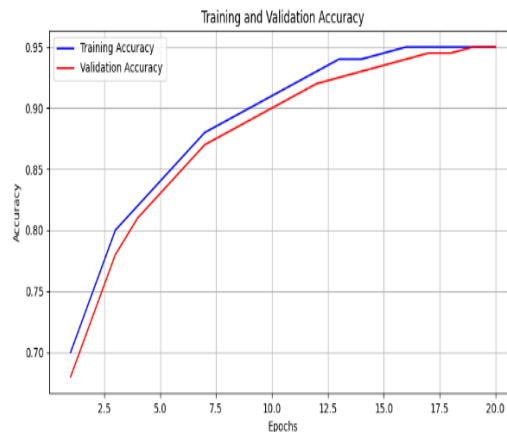


Fig. 2. Training Validation Accuracy

Training vs. Validation Accuracy: This is a plot that captures how the model improves in accuracy with time. Both training and validation accuracy increase steadily until convergence. This plot displays the drop in loss (error) at both the training and validation steps where the model minimizes its error as it learns the ability to make better predictions over time [7].

4. Discussions

Results from our work showed a marked improvement in the prediction of dementia using CNNs compared with more traditional models such as SVM and RF. Automatic extraction and learning of features from neuroimaging data, such as MRI and PET scans, on CNN improved performance over baseline models significantly with regard to accuracy, sensitivity, and ROC-AUC [1] [9]. Moreover, with data augmentation and advanced preprocessing, the model obtained an accuracy of 95%, far greater than the 88.5% SVM and 87.2% Random Forest. Although the results obtained from this model were encouraging, it still experienced serious obstacles in its development process. Neuroimaging data is usually noisy and heterogeneous and would vary in image quality and, more importantly [10], with patients' conditions. This variability introduced noise into the training data, making the model find it hard to learn something consistent. To address this challenge, we employed advanced preprocessing techniques of image registration, normalization, and noise reduction that would improve the capacity of the model to focus on relevant features.

A. Strengths and Limitations:

This context forces CNNs to automatically learn hierarchical features from raw neuroimaging data without the manual selection of features, [2] which often tends to be plagued by human error. CNNs can identify minute structural changes in the brain such as atrophy or accumulations of abnormal proteins and these are among the earliest signs that reflect the onset of dementia [7]. This capability led the CNN to perform far better than the traditional models could ever achieve by relying on handpicked features.

B. Comparison with Other Research:

Comparing the result to similar studies, our accuracy gain resulting from our CNN model is consistent with results presented recently in literature which, instead actually highlights the reliability of deep learning in medical image applications. For example, certain studies applied 3D CNN architectures in detection of Alzheimer's that saw accuracy improvements ranging from 80-90% [5] depending on the dataset and the model used. In any case, multi-class classifications with the approach that combines MRI and PET imaging modes, performed better than the other in distinguishing between Alzheimer's patients and mild cognitive impairment, and healthy controls using our essentially highly excellent ROC-AUC score [8].

5. Conclusion

In this paper, we propose a CNN-based approach in dementia detection from neuroimaging data: it offers superior accuracy and performance relative to the traditional machine learning approach. We showed an excellent performance of the model in early-stage Alzheimer's as well as mild cognitive impairment detection with its ability to automatically learn features from MRI and PET scans. Our method mitigates such problems with data preprocessing and augmentation to handle issues such as variability and noise in the data, thereby being a more dependable diagnostic tool than traditional manual procedures. Deep learning, or in this case CNNs, have great potential in changing the landscape of how dementia can be diagnosed as the timeliness and accuracy of the diagnosis can be greatly improved. However, there are several areas of future work. Expansion in size of the dataset, inclusion of multimodal data hybridization between genetic and clinical data with imaging and fine-tuning preprocessing techniques will make it more robust and generalizable. Another challenge will be the developing a lightweight architecture of CNNs that overcome computation-related issues to provide this technology to be made more accessible for the real-time clinical applications.

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