

# 2022 14<sup>th</sup> IEEE International Conference on Computational Intelligence and Communication Networks

## CICN 2022

### Table of Contents

Welcome Message CICN 2022 General Chairs.....	i
Welcome Message CICN 2022 Program Chairs.....	ii
Conference Committees.....	iii

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#### **Track-A: IT Enabled Service and Decision Systems**

Automating the Extraction and Activation of Web Service Credibility Measures - A Framework Design.....	1
Atef Shalan; Walaa Abo Elenin; Khaled Tarmissi; Alexander Boyett	
Business Intelligence Architecture to Improve Decision Making .....	7
Ciro Rodriguez; Cristhian Villasante Moreno; Ivan Petrlík; Pedro Lezama; Favio Guevara Puente; Yuri Pomachagua	
Deep Pre-Trained Contrastive Self-Supervised Learning: A Cyberbullying Detection Approach With Augmented Datasets .....	16
Lulwah Muhammad Al-Harig; Hana Alnuaim; Naghmeh Moradpoor; Zhiyuan Tan	
Evaluation of the Performance for IM-RED and IGRED Algorithms Using Discrete-Time Queues .....	23
Jawad Hasan AlKhateeb; Hussein El-jaber; Malak El-Amir	
Intelligent Glasses for Visual Impaired People .....	29
Ali Mustafa; Ahmed Omer; Ogbu Mohammed	
Time Efficient End-State Prediction Through Hybrid Trace Decomposition Using Process Mining ....	34
Zeeshan Tariq; Darryl Charles; Sally McClean; Ian McChesney; Paul Taylor	
Exploring Narrative Court Documents for Use in Police Academic Education.....	41
Ezdihar N. Bifari; Wadee Alhalabi	
Waste Classification System Using a Hybrid Deep Transfer Learning Model .....	46
Munirah Aldossary, Fadia El Hamami, Lamya Al Qahtani and Ahmed Abul Hasanaath; Ahmed Hussain; Hiren Mewada	

#### **Track-B: Image Processing, Signal Processing and Computer Vision**

Artificial Intelligent Approach for Colorful Image Colorization Using a DCNN .....	54
Santosh Vishwakarma; A Venugopal Rao; Shakti Kundu	
Image-Based Road Pothole Detection Using Deep Learning Model.....	59
Priyanka Gupta; Manish Dixit	

Investigating Image Augmentation for Classification of Chest X-Ray Images.....	65
<i>Wadha Almattar; Atheer Algherairy</i>	
Marathi Sign Language Hand Gesture Recognition Using Accelerometer and 3D Printed Gloves.....	72
<i>Sachin Patil; Sarang L Joshi; Hrushikesh B Kulkarni; Pradnesh Hagawane; Pradnya Shinde</i>	
Performance Analysis of High-Efficiency WPT for Communication Technologies.....	78
<i>Reem Emad Nafiaa, Aws Zuheer Yonis</i>	
Quantum Image Classification on NISQ Devices.....	83
<i>Shuroog Al-Ogbi; Abdulrahman Ashour; Muhamad Felemban</i>	
Realistic Face Masks Generation Using Generative Adversarial Networks.....	90
<i>Khaled Hasan Al Butainy; Muhamad Felemban; Hamzah Luqman</i>	
Seismic Structures Classification Using Novel Features From Seismic Images .....	96
<i>Ghadah Alhabib; Ghazanfar Latif; Jaafar Alghazo; Ghassen Ben Brahim</i>	
Analysis of Threshold Effect of Dual-tone Frequency Estimation Based on Method of Interval Errors .....	103
<i>En Yuan, Peng Liu, Bing Xu, Wenyu Zhang, Yongfen Wu, Yanqin Tang</i>	
Three-dimensional Reconstruction of Retinal Blood Vessels based on Binocular Vision .....	109
<i>Chao-liang Wu, Hua-zhu Liu, Zhi-jin Lv, Xiao-fang Zhao</i>	
Robotic Welding Path Identification Using FPGA-Based Image Processing .....	115
<i>Abdulkadir Saday; Ilker Ali Ozkan</i>	
Comparative Analysis of Deep Fake Detection Techniques .....	119
<i>Fatimah Alanazi</i>	
Small Object Difficulty (SOD) Modeling for Objects Detection in Satellite Images .....	125
<i>Debojyoti Biswas; Jelena Tesic</i>	
Colorization of Grayscale Images Using Deep Learning .....	131
<i>Abdullah Althbaity, Mohamed M. Dessouky, and Ishtiaq Rasool Khan</i>	
Enhancing Monocular Depth Estimation via Image Pre-Processing Techniques .....	139
<i>Miswar Syed; Abdulrahman Javaid ; Assad Alduaies, Mohammad Hashem Shullar, Uthman Baroudi; Mustafa Alnasser</i>	
An automatic segmentation method based on fuzzy AGA for thermometer reading image .....	144
<i>Yunguang Gao, Jibo Wu, AN Sheng, Qi Huang</i>	
<b>Track-C: Optimisation, Fuzzy, Neural Networks and Social Networking</b>	
A Comparative Study of Word Embedding Techniques for SMS Spam Detection .....	149
<i>Prashob Joseph; Suleiman Y Yerima</i>	
An Efficient Algorithm for Plant Disease Detection Using Deep Convolutional Networks.....	156
<i>Pratibha Nayar; Shivank Chhibber; Ashwani Kumar Dubey</i>	
An Improved Lightning Attachment Procedure Optimization Algorithm for Constrained Optimization Problems.....	161
<i>Yu-ling Lei; Xin-tian Jiang; Xin-xin Zhou</i>	
Application of Artificial Neural Network to Estimate Students Performance in Scholastic Assessment Test .....	166
<i>Shatha Al Ghazali; Sherzod Turaev; Saad Harous</i>	

Assessment of Deep Neural Network and Gradient Boosting Machines for Credit Risk Prediction Accuracy .....	171
<i>Sapiah Sakri</i>	
Comparative Analysis of Microservices and Monolithic Architecture.....	177
<i>Victor Benavente, Luiggi Yantas, Isabel Moscol, Ciro Rodriguez, Ricardo Inquilla, Yuri Pomachagua</i>	
Comparison of the Use of the DEMUCS Neural Network on Different Platforms for the Separation of Sources of Musical Origin.....	185
<i>Raul Pérez Alarcón, Luis Marcelo Pacheco Alvaro, Ciro Rodriguez, Favio Guevara Puente, Ivan Petrlik, Yuri Pomachagua</i>	
Find the Spreading Ability of the Influential Nodes Using the IC Model in Social Networks.....	189
<i>Koduru Hajarathaiah; Karthik Divvela; Yeswanth Attaluri; Nithin Chimata; Murali Krishna Enduri; Satish Anamalamudi</i>	
Fine Tuning an AraT5 Transformer for Arabic Abstractive Summarization.....	194
<i>Yasmin Esmaail Einieh; Amal AlMansour; Amani Jamal</i>	
Gender Impact on Emoji Sentiment Analysis Among Arabic Users in Digital Networks.....	199
<i>Shatha Ali A Hakami; Robert Hendley; Phillip Smith</i>	
Gyms Customer Loyalty Using the Logistic Regression Algorithm Technique.....	204
<i>Joaquin Moreno Muñoz, Miguel Ramirez Osorio, Ivan Petrlik; Ciro Rodriguez; Diego Rodriguez; Pedro Lezama; Yuri Pomachagua</i>	
Live Feed Emotion Detection During Project Meetings to Estimate Possible Success of Projects....	213
<i>Zeenat AlKassim</i>	
Network Traffic Classifications Using Gated Recurrent Units With Weighted Cross-Entropy.....	218
<i>Ashraf Mohammed Saeed; Zaid Alyafeai; Ashraf Mahmoud</i>	
Optimal Control by Pattern Search Optimization Method.....	224
<i>Kundan Kandhway</i>	
Predicting Autism Disorder of an Imbalanced Dataset Using Neural Network.....	229
<i>Najwan Al-Farouqi; Muayad Al-Athami; Raneem Qaddoura</i>	
Sentiment Analysis for Algerian Dialects Tweets.....	235
<i>Lamia Ouchene; Sadik Bessou</i>	
Oil Spill Identification Using Deep Convolutional Neural Networks.....	240
<i>David M Feinauer; Ghazanfar Latif; Abeer M. Alenazy; Nizar Tayem; Jaafar Alghazo; Loay Alzubaidi</i>	
Artificial Neural Network Modeling of Users' Behavioral Intention to Adopt M-Government Services .....	246
<i>Hussain Salman; Eman Almohsen; Anwaar Buzaboon; Maan Aljawder</i>	
Detecting Toxic Comments using Convolutonal Neural Networks Approach .....	252
<i>Varun Mishra, Monika Trpathi</i>	
A Hybrid Stacked Ensemble Technique to Improve Classification Accuracy for Neurological Disorder Detection on Reddit Posts.....	256
<i>Tejaswita Garg, Sanjay Kumar Gupta</i>	
Neural Network for Solving Ordinary Differential Equations .....	261
<i>Wengyao Jiang, Chen Xuan</i>	

A Parallelized Genetic Algorithms Approach to Community Energy Systems Planning.....	266
<i>Safae Bourhnane, Simon Abongmbo, Lei Fan, Jian Shi, Carlos Gamarra, Mohamed Riduan Abid, Muhammad Anan, Driss Benhaddou</i>	

## **Track-D: AI, IOT, IOT enabled Services, Web services, data mining and Cloud Computing**

A Data Mining Analysis of Cognitive Science and Artificial Intelligence.....	273
<i>Tayeb Brahim; Asra Yaqub; Joudi Bathallath; Hala Haneya; Fatmeh Al Salem</i>	
AI Regulation in Healthcare: New Paradigms for A Legally Binding Treaty Under the World Health Organization.....	277
<i>Rabai Bouderhem</i>	
AI Virtual Assistant for Online Laboratory Experiments Based on Multi-Threshold Technique and Genetic Algorithm for Analyzing the Student's Mouse Interaction Activities.....	282
<i>Mahmoud Elmesalawy; Ahmed M. Abd El-Haleem; ALaa Hamdy</i>	
An Implementation of a New Proposed Round-Robin Algorithm With Smart Time Quantum in Cloud Computing Environment.....	289
<i>Nehal Al-otaiby; Haifa Al-Shammare</i>	
An IoT Based Traffic Management System Using Drone and AI.....	297
<i>Arash Farahdel; Seyed Shahim Vedaei; Khan A Wahid</i>	
Clinical Data Analysis and Multilabel Classification for Prediction of Dengue Fever by Tuning Hyperparameter Using GridsearchCV.....	302
<i>Veena Kumari HM, Suresh DS, Dhananjaya PE</i>	
Cloud-Based Reconfigurable Hardware Accelerator for the KNN Classification Algorithm .....	308
<i>Awos Kanan; Amal Taha</i>	
Comparative Semantic Resume Analysis for Improving Candidate-Career Matching.....	313
<i>Asrar Hussain Alderham; Emad Sami Jaha</i>	
Dynamic Clustering and Data Aggregation for the Internet-Of-Underwater-Things Networks.....	322
<i>Kenechi G. Omeke, Michael Mollel, Syed Tariq Shah, Kamran Arshad, Lei Zhang, Qammer H. Abbasi and Muhammad Ali Imran</i>	
Home Appliances Using IoT and Machine Learning: The Smart Home.....	329
<i>Ashish Bagwari; Kritika Rathi; Vanshika Sharma; Swati Gupta; Geetam Tomar</i>	
IoT-Based Red Palm Weevil Early Detection and Tracking System.....	333
<i>Razan Alzaben; Shuruq Fallatah; Haneen Haneen Quraishi; Sadiq A Alhuwaidi; Ahmed Hussain</i>	
JUX - A Cloud Hosted Learning Management System Based on OpenedX .....	338
<i>Muhammad Noman Saeed; Ahmad Almufarreh; Khaled Noaman; Muhammad Arshad; Atiq Rafiq Shaikh</i>	
Low Cost and Scalable Haptic VR Glove.....	343
<i>Lara Bander Alotaibi; Maria Alabdulrahman; Ahmed Abul Hasanaath; Salahudean Basem Tohmeh; Nazeeruddin Mohammad</i>	
NoSQL Cloud Based Bigdata Technologies for Efficient Performance Evaluation in the Modern Era .....	350
<i>Sangeeta Gupta, Kavita Agrawal</i>	

Text Mining on Hospital Stay Durations and Management of Sickle Cell Disease Patients.....	355
<i>Mohammed Gollapalli; Latifa Alabdullatif; Farah Alsuwayeh; Moodhi Aljouali; Alhanoof Alhunieef; Zaina Batook</i>	
The Possibility of Artificial Intelligence to Improve Self-Driving in Modern Cars: Scoping Review ....	361
<i>Razan Althubaiti</i>	
K-Mean Clustering: A Case Study in Yvelines, Île-De-France .....	365
<i>Roxane Mallouhy; Christophe Guyeux; Chady Abou Jaoude; Abdallah Makhoul</i>	
Synchronization Techniques for Multi-threaded Web Server: A Comparative Study.....	373
<i>Hussah Albinali; Maha Alharbi; Randah Alharbi; Malak Aljabri</i>	
Construction of Medical Big Data Processing and Service Framework for Digital Intelligent Transformation .....	380
<i>Chuanyang ZHANG, Yufei PANG, Yu GUO</i>	
Intelligent Archive construction driven by artificial intelligence.....	385
<i>Fucheng Zhu, Fan Zhang, Yong Liu</i>	
Design and implementation of intelligent acquisition Terminal Based on Modbus .....	389
<i>Bin Zhang, Shejiao Hu</i>	

### **Track-E: Machine Learning, Deep Learning and Applications**

A New IDS for Smart Home Based on Machine Learning.....	393
<i>Tahani Gazdar</i>	
Accuracy Prediction on Detection of Breast Cancer Using Machine Learning Classifiers.....	401
<i>Aditya Pratap Singh; Shobit Agrawal</i>	
Accurate Estimate of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Children Utilizing Several Machine Learning Techniques.....	406
<i>Narinder Kaur; Ganesh Gupta; Abdul Hafiz</i>	
An Efficient Method to Predict the Tata-Motors Stock Price Using Hybrid Machine Learning Methods .....	412
<i>Abhishek Bajpai; Anjali Singh, Abhineet Verma</i>	
An Empirical Study on Fake News Prediction With Machine Learning Methods.....	419
<i>Manisha Aluri; Bhargav Boddupalli; Sumana Sree G; Divya Panchumarthi; Murali Krishna Enduri; Satish Anamalamudi</i>	
An Improved Assessing Requirements Quality With ML Methods.....	424
<i>Serda Hauser; Stephan Müller-Schmeer; Sabine Radomski; Bogdan Franczyk</i>	
COVID-19 & Lung Disease Detection Using Deep Learning.....	430
<i>Malti Nagle; Brijesh Kumar Chaurasia; BK Tripathi, Man Mohan Shukla</i>	
COVID-19 Prediction Using Machine Learning Based on the Patient's Vital Signs: A Case for Saudi Arabia.....	435
<i>Nehad Mohammed Ibrahim, Kawther S. Alqudaihi, Abdullah M. Almuhaideb, Irfan Ullah Khan, S.O. Olatunji (Aadam), Fahd A. Alhaidari, Nida Aslam, Mohammed S. Alshahrani,</i>	
Deep Learning Algorithms in Chest Images for Pneumonia Detection.....	442
<i>Fernando Tello Porras, Ciro Rodriguez, Diego Rodriguez, Pedro Lezama, Ricardo Inquilla, Yuri Pomachagua</i>	
Deep Learning System for Defect Classification of Solar Panel Cells.....	448

<i>Mohamed Mohandes; Hambal Tella; Shafiqur Rehman; A. Al-Shaikhi; Bo Liu</i>	
Deep Learning-Based Ship Detection on FPGAs.....	454
<i>Younis Ibrahim; Li Chen; Haonan Tian</i>	
Detection of Chronic Kidney Disease Using Machine Learning Approach.....	460
<i>Mohammed Gollapalli; Bashayr Saad; Jomana Alabdulkarim; Razan Marwan Sendi; Reema Alsabt; Sarah Alsharif</i>	
Ensemble-Based Machine Learning Models for the Preemptive Diagnosis of Cervical Cancer Using Clinical Data.....	466
<i>Sunday Olusanya Olatunji; Alhatoon Nawaf Alanazy; Lujain Alnajrani; Meshael Almusairi; Nawal Alsheikh; Salam Alshammasi; Rim Zaghdoud; Aisha Alansari</i>	
Fake News Detection Using Machine Learning Models.....	473
<i>Malak Aljabri; Dorieh M. Alomari; Menna Aboulnour</i>	
Identifiability of Causal-Based ML Fairness Notions.....	478
<i>Karima Makhlof; Sami Zhioua; Catuscia Palamidessi</i>	
Malicious PDF Detection Based on Machine Learning With Enhanced Feature Set.....	486
<i>Suleiman Y Yerima; Abul Bashar; Ghazanfar Latif</i>	
ML Based Methods XGBoost and Random Forest for Crop and Fertilizer Prediction.....	492
<i>Thara D K; Prema Sudha B G; Tara KN</i>	
Performance Evaluation of Machine Learning Models on Apache Spark: An Empirical Study.....	498
<i>Asma Yamani; Shikah J. Alsunaidi; Imane Boudellioua</i>	
Prediction of Downhole Pressure While Tripping .....	505
<i>Amir Mohammad; Mithushankar Panchalingam; Subankar Karunakaran; Reggie Davidrajuh</i>	
Text Classification and Categorization Through Deep Learning.....	513
<i>Sarhan M. Musa; Saiman Quazi</i>	
The Validity of Using Technical Indicators When Forecasting Stocks Prices Using Deep Learning Models: Empirical Evidence Using Saudi Stocks.....	520
<i>Salahadin Mohammed</i>	
Twitter Spam Accounts Detection Using Machine Learning Models.....	525
<i>Shikah J. Alsunaidi; Rawan Alraddadi; Hamoud Aljamaan</i>	
Using Edge Devices and Machine Learning for Controlled Access to a Smart Campus.....	532
<i>Rajeev Ratan; Stephen Ghool; Reshawn J Ramjattan; Shiva Ramoudith; Patrick Hosein</i>	
Extract Compliance-Related Evidence Using Machine Learning.....	537
<i>Hussain Talal Alattas ; Reema Mubarak Alammari; Huda Ayad Alswaidan ; Munirah Ali Almoqbel, Noof Al Mahasheer, Fatema Almassary, Naya Nagy, Saad Alharthi</i>	
A Deep Learning Based Approach to Android Botnet Detection Using Transfer Learning.....	543
<i>Abdul Sami Mohammed; Sumayyah Seher; Suleiman Y Yerima; Abul Bashar</i>	
Classification of Aglaonema Using Machine Learning.....	549
<i>Agus Pratondo; Astri Novianty</i>	
Deep Learning With Noisy Labels: Learning True Labels as Discrete Latent Variable.....	554
<i>Azeddine Elhassouny; Soufiane Idbrahim</i>	
An HAR-11 Net Model for Human Action Recognition Using Deep Learning Techniques.....	561
<i>A Venugopal Rao; Santosh Vishwakarma; Shakti Kundu</i>	

## **Track-F: Communication Systems, Networks, Navigation and Intelligent Systems**

A New Intelligent System for Evaluating and Assisting Students in Laboratory Learning Management System.....	566
<i>Hadeer A. Hassan; Mohab Mohamed Eid; Mahmoud Elmesalawy; Ahmed M. Abd El-Haleem</i>	
An Emerging Application of Intelligent Networks in Transportation and Industry Automation.....	653
<i>Sunil Kumar; Rijul Garg, Priya Ranjan</i>	
Artificial Bee Colony DLMS Beyond Mean Square Error Boundary in Ad-Hoc WSN.....	572
<i>Ali M. Almohammedi; Azzedine Zerguine; Mohamed Deriche; Sadiq M. Sait</i>	
Cross-Layer Optimization for Underlay Cognitive Radio Systems With Multicarrier Transmission....	577
<i>Nour Mansour; Venkata Krishna Praneeth Vaddadi; Dirk Dahlhaus</i>	
I-Light: An Improved Lighting System for Poultry Farms.....	585
<i>Ertie Abana, Hubert Chester Damo, Ariel Lorenzo, Shedric Dimayuga, Peejay Paguirigan, Princess Gail Dineros, Korrine Villaverde</i>	
Improved Performance Two-Dimensional Direction of Arrival Estimation Algorithm With Unknown Number of Noncoherent Sources.....	590
<i>Nizar Tayem; Ahmed Hussain; AbuMuhammad Moinuddeen; Redha M Radaydeh; Jaafar Alghazo</i>	
Low-End Hand Held Communication Devices in a Post-Disaster Scenario.....	595
<i>Ratna R. Sarkar, Amitabha Chakrabarty, Mohammad Zahirur Rahman</i>	
NANO-BOTS: Designing and Manufacturing.....	600
<i>Ashish Bagwari; Kritika Rathi; Sonika Khetan; Jyotshana Bagwari; Ashraf Samarah</i>	
New Approach in the Error Performance Analysis of SM Over Time-Variant Rayleigh Fading Channels.....	606
<i>Yazid M Khattabi; Salim A Alkhawaldeh</i>	
Transmit and Receive Filter Design for MIMO-OFDM Based WiMAX Systems.....	611
<i>Rajesh K; Varaprasad G; Muralikrishnan S</i>	
UQU GIS Based Navigation System.....	616
<i>Shoaib S. Obaidi; Khaled Tarmissi; Atef Shalan; Saud S. Alotaibi</i>	
The Effect of Human Blockage on the Performance of RIS Aided Sub-THz Communication System.....	622
<i>Ahmed Nor; Octavian Fratu; Simona Halunga</i>	
Software-Defined Time Sensitive Networks (SD-TSN) for Industrial Automation.....	626
<i>Mohamed Seliem, Dirk Pesch</i>	
Phase Reconfigurable Hybrid Coupler Implemented Using Capacitor-Loaded Transmission Lines.....	633
<i>Zulfi; Joko Suryana; Achmad Munir</i>	
3D Printing Technology for Rapid Manufacturing Discone Antenna Based on PLA Material.....	637
<i>Achmad Munir, Zulfi, Rheyuniarto Sahlendar Asthan, Folin Oktafiani</i>	
Development of Proximity-Coupled-Fed S-Band Array Antenna for Microwave Imaging.....	641
<i>Sri Mulyani; Fauzia Anis Sekar Ningrum; Edwar; Achmad Munir</i>	
Design of Telkom University Logo Antenna and Its Experimental Characterization.....	645
<i>Edwar; Shafira Amkha Zahra; Luthfi Noor Syadzy Zamachsyari; Rezki Benedikto</i>	

*Renwarin; Muhammad Farhan Maulana; Achmad Munir*

Implementation of Four-Band Slotted Patch Antenna ..... 649  
*Rishi Parashar, Dinesh Yadav, Ankur Saharia, Manish Tiwari, Ghanshyam Singh*

## **Track-G: Power Devices, transmission systems and Renewable Energy**

A Study of Global Temperature Anomalies and Their Changing Trends Due to Global Warming.....660  
*Bikash Sadhukhan; Somenath Mukherjee; Raj Kumar Samanta*

Correlation-Based Clustering of Telecommunication Equipment in Smart Grid..... 667  
*Imene Mecheter, Joao Vctor Teles Garcia, Ricardo José de Franca Almeida, Thiago Montenegro Uchoa*

Micro Hydro Generator Turbine..... 672  
*Ertie Abana; Marion James Ladia, Christine Fernando, Nicole Emmanuelle Pagalilauan, Jay Vee Miranda, Ailyn Samontina, Rouxanne Macoco*

Optimization of Solar Energy Using Artificial Neural Network Controller..... 677  
*Sarhan M. Musa; Kasim Mohammad*

Optimization of Solar Energy Using Recurrent Neural Network Controller ..... 681  
*Sarhan M. Musa; Kasim Mohammad*

Performance and Efficiency Analysis for Lithium-Ion Battery Using State of Charge Method..... 686  
*Sarhan M. Musa; Walter Udeze*

Vertical Wind Speed Estimation Using Generalized Additive Model (GAM) for Regression..... 691  
*Hilal H. Nuha; Rizka Reza Pahlevi; Mohamed Mohandes; Shafiqur Rehman; Hambal Tella; A. Al-Shaikhi*

Load Frequency Control of Interconnected Power System Using Particle Swarm Optimization Based Disturbance Observer-Enhanced PI Controller..... 696  
*Edgar T. Zapanta; Ronald Vincent M. Santiago*

Intelligent charging and discharging system based on V2G..... 702  
*Xiaolong Yang, Shejiao Hu*

## **Track-H: Security Algorithms, Cryptography and Blockchain**

A New Cybersecurity Assessment Framework for Private Networks..... 706  
*Saeed Alshehri, Hashem Alaidaros, Saad Haj Bakry, Mohammad Arafah*

A Study on Automated Cyberattacks Detection and Visualization..... 715  
*Fahd Alhaidari; Rawan Mushref Tammas; Dana Saeed Alghamdi, Reem Aied Alrashedi; Nora Adnan Althani; Sara Mohammad Alsaidan; Malak Khaled Alfossail; Rachid Zagrouba; Hussain Alattas*

Blockchain Technology in Pharmaceutical Supply Chain Management..... 723  
*Agya Pathak; Sameer Shrivastava; Palempati Harsha Vardhini; Abhinay Meka; Divesh Swami; Zakir Hussain; Malaya Dutta Borah*

Cyberattacks and Solutions for Future Factories..... 728  
*Linah Khamis Aljaryan; Wasan Hussein Alfalahi; Thamer Saleh Al Khamis*

Bio-inspired Decentralized Rogue Node Detection in Fair Dynamic Spectrum Access Networks..... 735  
*Truc T Duong; Anna Wisniewska; Nirmimesh Ghose*

Early-Stage Malware and Ransomware Forecasting in the Short-Term Future Using Regression-Based Neural Network Technique..... 743  
*Khalid Abdullah Albulayhi; Qasem Abu Al-Haija*

Experimental Implementation of Shor's Quantum Algorithm Against RSA.....	748
<i>Aminah A Albuainain; Jana Abdullah Alansari; Samiyah Alrashidi; Wasmiyah M Alqahtani; Jana Alshaya; Naya Nagy</i>	
Ibn Omar Hash Algorithm.....	753
<i>Raed Omar Shafei</i>	
Intrusion Classification for Cloud Computing Network: A Step Towards an Intelligent Classification System.....	757
<i>Kanda Alamer,Abdulaziz Aldribi</i>	
IoTZeroJar: Towards a Honeypot Architecture for Detection of Zero-Day Attacks in IoT.....	765
<i>Mahmoud Osama Ellouh; Mustafa Ghaleb; Muhamad Felemban</i>	
Mitigating Security Threats of Bitcoin Network by Reducing Message Broadcasts During Transaction Dissemination.....	772
<i>Khaled Tarmissi; Atef Shalan; Abdullah Al Shahrani; Rayan Alsulamy; Saud S. Alotaibi; Sarah Al-Shareef</i>	
Parallelizing Multi-Keys RSA Encryption Algorithm Using OpenMP.....	778
<i>Reem Alzaher; Wafa Hantom; Alanoud Aldweesh</i>	
Processing of Images Based on Machine Learning to Avoid Unauthorized Entry.....	783
<i>Ciro Rodriguez; Cesar Pena, Israel Arellano Romero</i>	
Detecting Open Banking API Security Threats Using Bayesian Attack Graphs.....	789
<i>Dawood Behbehani; Nikos Komninos; Khalid Albegain; Muttukrishnan Rajarajan</i>	
Penetration Testing Tools for OWASP's Top Ten Security Vulnerabilities: An Evaluation Study.....	797
<i>Noor Alhomeed; Sara Alsaqer; Malak Aljabri; Maryam Aldossary; Bushra Alhetelah; Malek Alt hubiany; Ohoud Alotaibi</i>	
The Implementation of Encryption Algorithms in MQTT Protocol for IoT Constrained Devices.....	804
<i>Yasir Iqbal; Muhammad Faisal Amjad; Fawad Khan; Haider Abbas</i>	
Web Application Security Threats and Mitigation Strategies When Using Cloud Computing as Backend.....	811
<i>Asma Yaman; Reem Aljunaid; Khawlah Bajbaa</i>	
WSN Routing Protocols: Anonymity Prospective Analysis.....	819
<i>Abdulrahman Abu Elkhail; Uthman Baroudi; Mohamed Younis</i>	
Email Security: Concept, Mathematics and Applications.....	825
<i>Abdullah Hussein Al-Ghushami ; Dabeeruddin Syed ; Ameema Zainab ; Haya Abdelshahid, Haneen Al-Eshaq, Fatima Alsayed, Noora Al-Marri and Reem Alkuwari</i>	
A Study of XXE Attacks Prevention Using XML Parser Configuration.....	830
<i>Safdar Nawaz Khan Marwat; Safdar Nawaz Khan Marwat</i>	
<b>Author Index .....</b>	<b>836</b>

# Image-based Road Pothole Detection using Deep Learning Model

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**Abstract**—Road pothole detection is essential to ensure any engineering structures' health. Manual pothole detection and classification is very human-intensive work. Several sensor-based techniques, laser imaging approaches, and image processing techniques have been deployed to less the intervention of humans in road inspections. Still, these approaches have some limitations, such as high cost, less accuracy, and risk during detection, as Machine learning-based approaches require manual feature extraction for the prediction. Therefore, this proposed work aims to use deep learning modes for better pothole detection results. Several pothole datasets are available online, and deep learning-based methods require lots of data for the training; therefore, pothole images are collected from the different datasets and combined into one dataset to train the model. Augmentation is also applied to the dataset for better training, as augmentation provides images with different angles, and by fine-tuning the model consequently, records with about 98 % accuracy.

**Keywords**— Deep learning, Convolutional Neural Network, Pothole Detection, Image Augmentation, Image Enhancement

## I. INTRODUCTION

Road accidents are one of the leading causes of death, disability, and hospitalisation globally, particularly in India[1]. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), at least one person out of every ten people who died on the world's roads is from India. The cost of vehicle accidents is borne by the victims and their families and the economy in terms of premature deaths, injuries, disabilities, and lost potential income. In 2020, 366138 road accidents caused the deaths of 1,31714 people and injured 3,48,279 individuals[3]. Potholes can be one reason for these accidents; they cause discomfort and sometimes lead to vehicle accidents. Potholes can be formed due to wear and tear, weathering of roads, effects of temperature variations, and high-water pressure. Roads and other large-scale structures should be inspected frequently. Traditional inspection methods are time-consuming and need extra human interventions[2]. With the advancement in technology, several intelligent systems are introduced for inspection, which is less time-consuming and provides a low-cost system with fewer human interventions[10].

A convolutional neural network (CNN) based pothole detection method is suggested to address these problems. Deep learning based method decreases computation time and produces an exact dimension of features in these tasks[4][5][6].

## A. Motivation and challenges

Real-time road inspection in complex environments such as low- illumination environments, no reachable areas are crucial. Several methods have been developed for pothole detection because of the computational time it needs. An efficient inspection system that detects potholes in images is required for the roads' fast treatment. In this situation, a pre-processed dataset and robust technique are the basic need of the current inspection system. This work is done for better results in road pothole detection with less computational time. This research compares the accuracy of an existing pothole detection method with the proposed transfer learning-based method.



Fig. 1. Sample of pothole images [1][2]

The primary contribution of this research may be summarized as follows: First, using digital image processing technology, the image dataset is deliberately pre-processed and augmented for better results. Second, the CNN model is trained using the dataset, and parameters are optimised for better accuracy. Finally, the performance of the suggested methods was validated using a dataset with good results.

## II. Related work

Computer vision-based technologies have been widely implemented for real-time pothole detection[7][8][9] on roads, including wide cracks. Here some pothole detection techniques are discussed with their pros and cons as road's potholes always need urgent treatment for safety purposes.

Sunil et al. [14] suggested a pothole detection and warning system based on mobile sensing called pothole detection system (PDS). It detects pothole using the Machine learning approach by gathering data from moving vehicles, and data from the vibrations and the GPS sensors. This method was first implemented in the Noida sector, and 80% of road defects need urgent treatment.

Hadistan et al. [15] have also proposed a low-cost, sensor-based detection approach with a warning system for pothole detection on roads. But it can work with the 4% distance range from the sensor.

Ravi et al. [16] proposed a deep learning-based classification approach for pothole detection. This proposed model classified the pothole images, and after the classification, images are passed through the detection model for the bounding box generation across the potholes. The YOLOv3 model is used to detect the pothole and achieves 89% accuracy for testing. It can be increased by using a more comprehensive dataset containing images of different lighting conditions and cutting down the labor and time by using public transport for data collection.

Aparna et al. [1] suggested a convolutional neural network-based method for pothole detection using thermal images, but it achieved only 64.42% accuracy. This article implements a variant of the pretrained Resnet model, and ResNet50 and ResNet101 give better accuracy.

Hoang et al. [17] proposed the least squares support vector machine (LS-SVM) and the artificial neural network based method for pothole identification. In this work, the classification accuracy rate for the LS-SVM method is 89%, while the ANN algorithm's accuracy rate is around 86%.

K. an. et al. [18] tested several pre-trained pothole detection models, giving 97% classification accuracy with colored images and 97.5 % with grayscale images. Different models such as Inception\_v4, Inception\_ResNet\_v2, ResNet\_v2\_152, MobileNet are experimented, and results show models are 96.5~97.5% accurate.

Gajjar et al. [19] presented a deep learning-based real-time pothole detection method. Three models, including faster R-CNN, SSD, and YOLOv3, have trained on the dataset, while results show that YOLOv3 provides better results and performs best in real-time.

Ahmed et al.[20] proposed a smart pothole detection method using deep learning, which is based on dilated convolution. This paper modified the VGG16 model for better results and less computational power. Some convolutional layer has been removed, and different dilation rates have been used for the modification. This proposed method uses modified VGG16 as a backbone for the Faster RCNN and gives better mean precision and shorter inference time.

### III. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

This research proposes a method for pothole detection. This section explains the entire process of the proposed methodology. As shown in figure 3, The general flow of the

proposed methodology is that the dataset has been collected to train the model. In the first step, prepare the dataset by collecting pothole images from various sources. As for better model training for pothole detection, a good amount of dataset is required. In the second step, a model is required for pothole detection. For this work, the deep learning model is used to achieve better results as it is the methodology that can be used to solve most problems like object detection and classification. In this study, several pretrained models have experimented on the pre-processed dataset. Still, the ResNet50 model performed well compared to another variant of the ResNet model for road pothole detection. In the third step, train the model with specific data, validate the model with the remaining data, and visualize the results.

#### A. Pothole dataset

As some standard pothole image datasets are available for road potholes so in this study, the author combined two open datasets [12][13] and acquired some images from a smartphone with a high-resolution camera of 2448x3256. For better model training, raw images of the pothole with a sensible variety of image variations, including lighting, shadow, and so on, capable of possibly triggering false alarms, are acquired from roads using a high-resolution camera. The main focus was to increase the diversity of the dataset so that the model learns from different perspectives. The dataset has two classes named positive and negative with a total of 1281 images, of which 929 images have potholes and 352 non-pothole images of variable size, so further pre-processing is required for a better dataset.

#### B. Pre-processing and data augmentation of the dataset

To carry out the proposed work, this article used deep learning on the pothole dataset, and it requires a huge volume of pre-processed data to train the model. The captured data needs pre-processing as images has to be the same size. Some images require cropping for the images because some images have unuseful information.

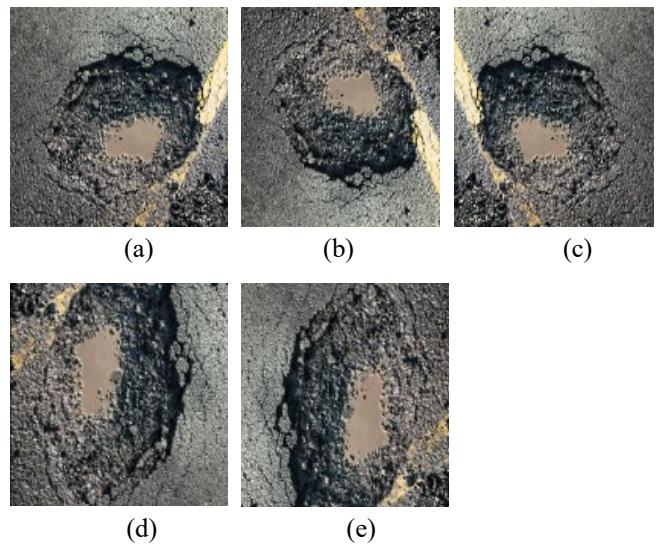


Fig. 2. (a) Original image (b) FlipVertical (c) FlipHorizontal (d) Rotate 90°FlipVertical (e) Rotate90° Flip Horizontal

Image augmentation is typically required to boost the performance of deep models to build a robust classifier with very little training data. To increase the size of the dataset, images are augmented in different scenarios such as horizontal flipping, vertical flipping, rotation $90^{\circ}$  with horizontal flipping, and rotation $90^{\circ}$  with vertical flipping.

Model training by the variety of image variations gives good results. The dataset is augmented with horizontal and vertical flipping and rotation. Figure 2(a) shows the original image, and Figures 2(b)(c)(d), and (e) are the corresponding augmented images.

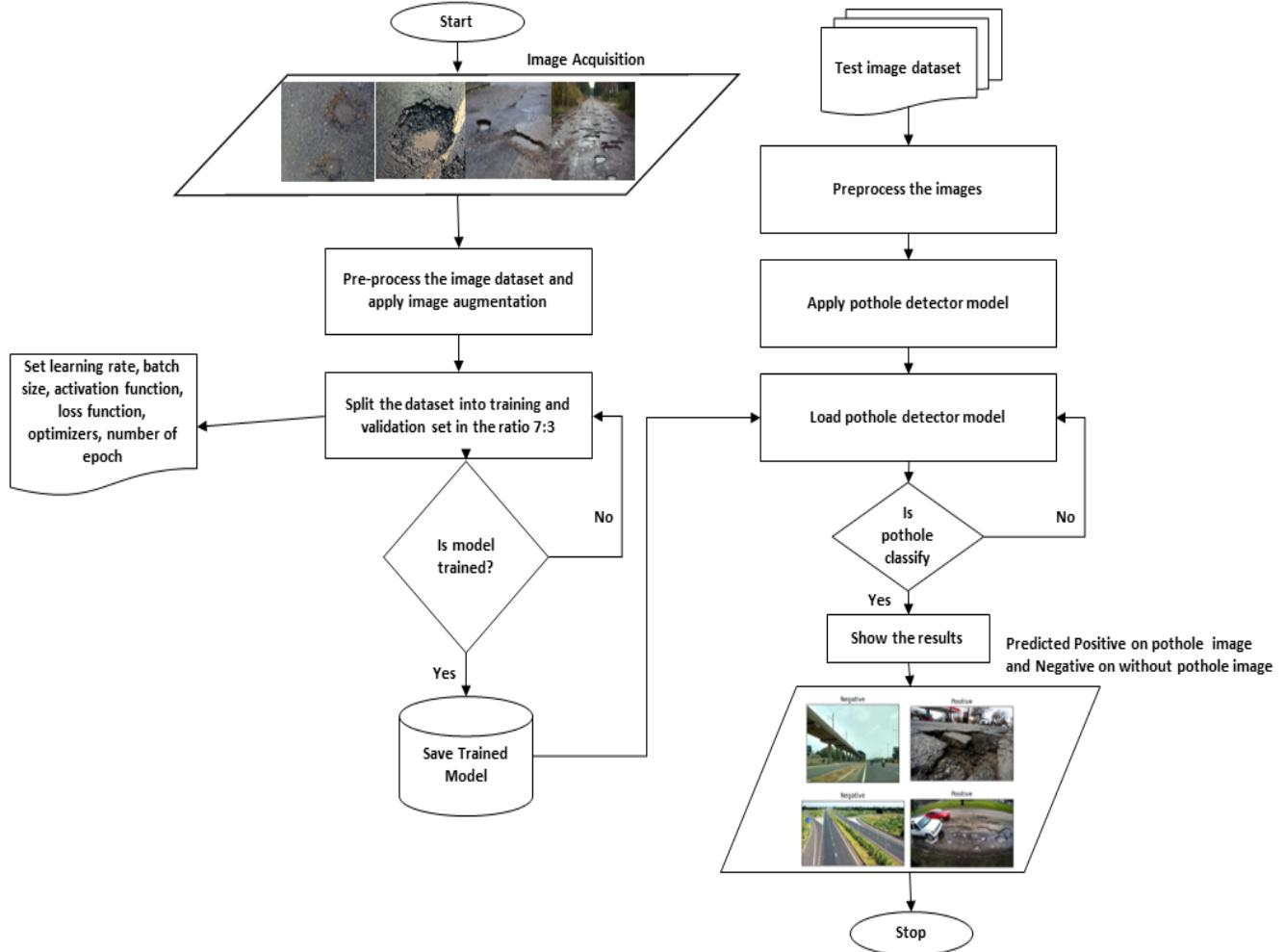


Fig. 3. Flow chart of the proposed methodology

### C. Deep learning model and transfer learning

A CNN model is made up of some convolutional units and an FCL. Convolutional blocks contain a convolutional layer, an activation function, and with variants of pooling layer. A convolutional layer performs a convolution operation to the output to extract the features from the preceding layers using a set of filters or kernels. The recent deep architecture of CNN, such as AlexNet, Inception, VGG16, and ResNet, has improved prior-art configurations by adding weight layers.

#### Transfer learning

Most previous studies proposed pothole detection techniques that used CNNs trained from scratch for pothole detection. On the other hand, transfer learning has improved a

pothole detector's training efficiency and accuracy. It can create accurate models while saving time. In this method, rather than creating a model from scratch, choose a model already trained in a similar and much larger dataset to solve similar problems. To classify the potholes images, one pretrained model is imported, and then apply fine-tuning to the model to accomplish the given task.

#### Residual Neural Network Model (ResNet)

The ResNet was proposed by He et al. [97], which placed first in the ILSVRC-2015. One of the versions of ResNet is ResNet50, with 48, 1, 1 convolutional, average, maxpooling layer respectively.

It included residual connections amongst layers, supporting the reduction of loss, preservation of knowledge gain, and improvement of training efficiency.

The convolution of its input plus residual connections gives the final output. Figure 4 shows the basic architecture of ResNet50, which is a broadly used convolutional architecture pre-trained on ImageNet [15]

In this proposed work, ResNet50 has been selected for pothole detection. ResNet50 model pretrained on ImageNet has been chosen over different model because of better accuracy for classification.

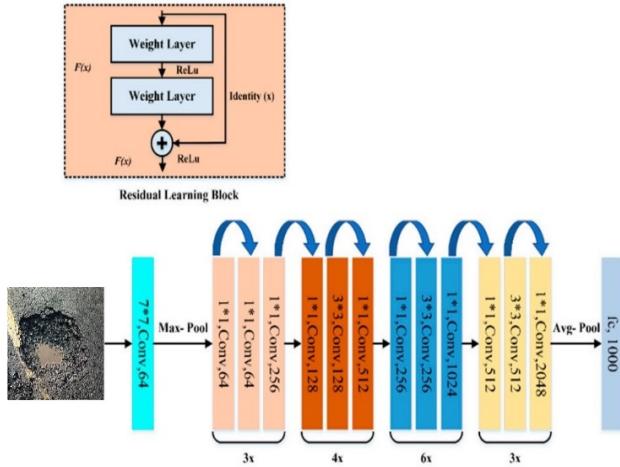


Fig. 4. ResNet50 architecture[11]

Transfer learning is performed on the last layer for the pothole classification (i.e., whether the image has a pothole or not). Dense layers are added at the bottom of the model, and the Softmax activation function is used at the last layer with two outputs, as our model has only two outputs (i.e., a pothole image and a non-pothole image). Model performance is affected by the model's parameters, so fine-tuning parameters such as learning rate and optimizer can increase the model performance. This work selects the ADAM optimizer as it gives higher accuracy than the SGD optimizer. The categorical cross-entropy is an excellent choice for classification tasks. The only activation function recommended for use with the categorical cross-entropy loss function is Softmax. When adjusting model weights during training, the cross-entropy loss is used. The goal is to minimise the loss, which means that the smaller the loss, the better the model. Cross-entropy is defined as

$$L = - \sum_{i=1}^n t_i \log (p_i) \quad (2)$$

Where  $t_i$  is the truth label and  $p_i$  is the Softmax probability for the  $i^{th}$  class.

#### D. Experimental design, Metrics, outcomes, and analysis

##### i. Experimental setup

This experiment is done by using a laptop with 8 GB RAM, an i7 core processor, and a 4GB NVIDIA GPU

processor, as well as Window10 OS. The model training is done after complete implementation on the Visual Studio code platform. The image dataset is randomly divided into 70% and 30% images for training and validation, respectively. Models are also trained without GPU, but it takes too much time. As a result, training time decreased significantly by switching to a GPU environment.

##### ii. Evaluation metrics

Several measures [11] are used to evaluate the pothole detection approaches. In this work, accuracy is calculated to evaluate the proposed method. Accuracy evaluation of the proposed method is calculated by the following:

Accuracy [Acc]: Accuracy can analyse the classification model's correctness. It implies how comparable a result is to being correct. The ratio of correctly classified classes and the total number of testing classes is termed accuracy

$$Acc = \frac{Tp+Tn}{Tp+Fp+Tn+Fn} \quad (1)$$

tp, tn, fp, and fn are true positive, true negative, false positive, and false negative. These are explained as follows:

Tp= predicted pothole, and actually, it has potholes.

Tn= predicted non-pothole, and actually, it is non-pothole.

Fp= predicted pothole, and actually, it is non-pothole.

Fn= predicted non-pothole, and actually, it has potholes.

##### iii. The outcome of the different dataset

Figure 4 shows the experimental outcome of the collected dataset. Positive indicates that the image has potholes, and negative indicates that the images do not have potholes. In figure 4, it is easily shown that potholes are classified clearly with a positive and negative labels.



Fig. 5. Results visualisation on the combined dataset

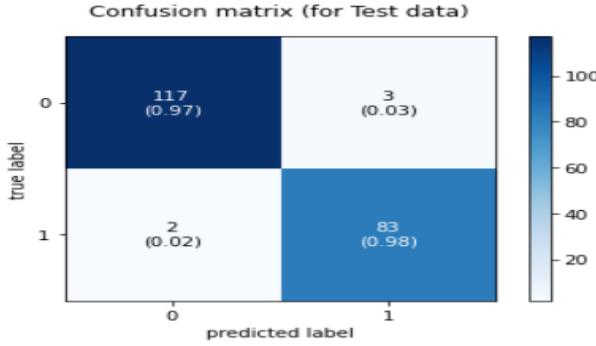
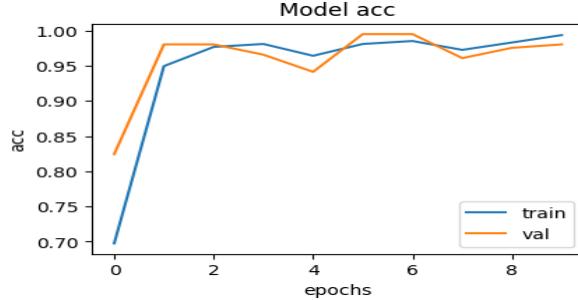


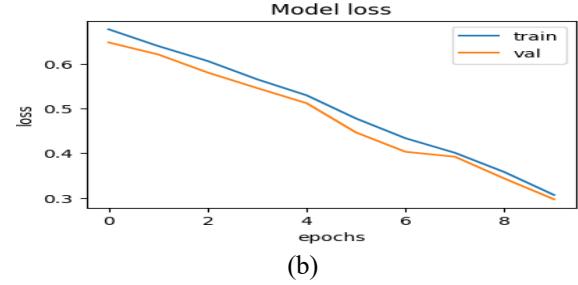
Fig. 6. Confusion matrix of the dataset (pothole-0 and non-pothole-1)

#### iv. Result analysis

Figure 5 depicts the accuracy of the result by the confusion matrix. In figure 5, 0 indicates pothole, and 1 indicates non-pothole. 117 images are clearly classified as potholes, and 83 images do not have potholes. On the other hand, 2 images were wrongly classified as potholes, and 3 are wrongly classified as non-pothole. Results show that image size 224x224 gives better results with validation accuracy of 98% and validation loss of 18.92%.



(a)



(b)

Fig. 7. (a) Model accuracy as per epoch (b) Model loss as per epoch

Figure 6 shows the performance graph of the proposed method. Figure 6a shows the accuracy analysis, and figure 6b shows the loss analysis of the method per epoch.

TABLE I. COMPARISON WITH THE PREVIOUS METHOD

Model	Pretrained Model	Optimizer=Adam, Image size= 224x224			
		Training		Validation	
		Accuracy	Loss	Accuracy	Loss
CNN-based Resnet50 [1]	Yes	90.05	25.11	91.77	24.07
Our Proposed Method	Yes	<b>99.37</b>	<b>18.69</b>	<b>98.05</b>	<b>18.72</b>

Table 1 summarizes the results of previous models used for pothole detection and the recent fine-tuned model. The experiment shows training accuracy of 99% and loss of 18.69% by dividing the dataset into 70:30 ratio for training and validation. Table 2 shows the comparison of different previously proposed methods on different datasets. Hoang [17] used LS SVM on road images and got 87 % accuracy. Ryu et al[22] uses 90 images that were selected from the video clip and got 73.5% accuracy. An et al [18] implemented different deep learning models on 3186 images and achieved 96.5 to 97 % accuracy for pothole detection.

TABLE II. COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED METHODS

S. No.	Reference	Method used	Dataset	Image size	Accuracy (%)
1	Hoang et al. [17]	LS-SVM and NN using steerable filter-based feature extraction	Total 200 images of roads	150x150	87
2	Ryu et al. [22]	Segmentation, candidate extraction, and decision	Total 90, 2D road images were selected from the video clip	1280x720	73.5
3	An et al. [18]	ANNs(InceptionV3, ResNet_v2_152,MobileNet_v1)	Total 3186 images of potholes	224x224	96.5~97
4	Aparna et al. [1]	CNN-based Resnet50 model	Road thermal images	224 x 224	97.08
5	Proposed work	Resnet50 using transfer learning	Smartphones and camera images of potholes	224x224	98.05

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Pothole detection using deep learning methods can assist with better road maintenance, particularly in developing countries with limited resources. For this aim, the proposed convolutional neural network-based system using images can compare with existing pothole detection techniques. The proposed ResNet50 model with transfer learning has achieved 98.05% accuracy, the highest ever reported compared with the previous ResNet model, which achieved 97.08% accuracy.

Furthermore, after classifying an image as a pothole, the proposed work can be further extended to detect the region of potholes and segment the pothole image by labeling the pothole dataset. Parameters such as pothole severity can be detected, allowing it to be determined which area requires immediate repair work.

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