DETECTION OF CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES IN ECG SIGNALS USING CNN

Yash Chauhan[1], Shilpi Mohanty[1], Sunil Kumar[1], Monika Vishwakarma[2]

[1]School of Computer Science and Engineering, Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore, India
[2]Manipal University Jaipur
{[1]yashchauhan4579@gmail.com, [1]mshilpi2002@gmail.com, [1]2sunil.cs@gmail.com, [2]monika.vishwakarma@jaipur.manipal.edu}

Abstract

Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) are the leading cause of death, often developing silently until they become critical. This study explores deep learning, particularly CNNs with residual connections, for automated ECG-based CVD detection. It overcomes difficulties including data imbalance utilising augmentation techniques and boosts real-time processing for wearable and clinical applications. By increasing early detection, minimising human error, and enabling speedier medical interventions, this technique has the potential to drastically cut CVD-related mortality rates.

Keywords: Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), ECG, Deep learning, CNNs, Residual connections, Data augmentation, Real-time processing, Automated diagnosis, Early detection.

1.INTRODUCTION

With 17.9 million deaths per year, cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) continue to be the world's leading cause of mortality [1]. Although electrocardiograms (ECGs) are crucial for diagnosis, conventional techniques are labour-intensive and error-prone since they depend on professional interpretation [2]. Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) with residual connections, in particular, have greatly improved CVD detection through advances in deep learning (DL), improving feature extraction and classification accuracy [3]. By using wavelet transforms, ECG analysis is further improved and models are more equipped to identify intricate patterns in cardiac signals [8].

Notwithstanding advancements, issues with clinical validation, data imbalance, and model interpretability still exist [6]. While MRI-based deep learning applications provide further diagnostic insights [9], data augmentation strategies improve model flexibility across varied populations [7] to increase dependability. Additionally, wearable ECG monitoring powered by AI is transforming remote patient care and early detection [10]. Regardless, the assurance of practical utility and transparency is extremely essential [5]. In the long run, enhancement of CNN-based models and integration of AI into personalized treatment plans will be leaned on for the advancement of cardiovascular healthcare [1].

2. Related Work

The enhancement of ECG-based cardiovascular disease (CVD) detection is done by getting through the obstacles of manual interpretation and errors in diagnosis. This is done by the means of modern developments in deep learning technologies [1]. Although deep learning and machine learning techniques helps in solving the need for accurate and scalable solutions, however, even to this day, traditional ECG analysis heavily relies upon on expert analysis [2]. The results of multiple studies done on CNN-based architectures for arrhythmia classification have signalled that there is an increase in accuracy while recognizing a range of cardiac disorders [3]. The lack of explainability, data asymmetry, and real-time processing restrictions obstruct the practical deployment of same[2].

Noise reduction and data augmentation are such preprocessing methods enhance the generalisation in deep learning models that are trained on the MIT-BIH Arrhythmia Dataset [5]. Demonstration of better feature extraction with AlexNet and SqueezeNet which are pre-trained models have also been shown by studies that combine transfer learning [6]. Researchers have also improved interpretability by examining hybrid models which combine DL with standard ML methods like SVM and KNN [7]. Even after significant advancements, the necessity still remains larger datasets, real-time deployment in clinical settings, and more model transparency [8]. Concentration on attention processes, domain adaptation, and hybrid architectures should be focussed on by future studies to improve ECG-based CVD detection [9]. [10] prioritised feature extraction and noise reduction by creating a classifier that uses neural networks, SVM, and KNN for attaining brilliant accuracy on ECG data.

3 Proposed Model

Classification of ECG signals into five distinct heartbeat groups is done by the proposed approach. It utilizes deep learning, Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) to be precise. The need for manual ECG interpretation that is labour-intensive and prone to human error is pretty high. Reducing this requirement and enhancing automated arrhythmia detection is the primary objective of this approach. The model is trained by datasets including the MIT-BIH Arrhythmia Database and the PTB Diagnostic ECG Databases to assure its application in real-world medical circumstances. Changes in patient demographics, noise artefacts, and heart illnesses cause substantial variability. This results in the design of the model to be dependable, adaptable, and capable of classifying ECG data in real time.

3.1 Classification of heart beats

Non-ectopic beats (N), supraventricular ectopic beats (S), ventricular ectopic beats (V), fusion beats (F), and unknown beats (Q) are five classes the model divides ECG signals into to ensure thorough arrhythmia diagnosis. Non-ectopic beats (N) sourced by the sinoatrial (SA) node keep the heartbeat normal and necessary for healthy heart function. Supraventricular ectopic beats (S) derived by AV node cause premature contractions that throw off the heart's rhythm. They are often triggered by coffee, stress, or underlying medical disorders. The normal conduction channel circumvented by Ventricular ectopic beats (V) that originate in the ventricles. It may be a sign of severe arrhythmias if this produces frequent broad and irregular QRS complexes.

Complex arrhythmic patterns, noise, or atypical heart activity are produced by unknown beats (Q) and hence are ECG waveforms that do not fit into any predefined category. Identifying and managing these beats is essential for enhancing automated arrhythmia detection and reducing misclassification. Fusion beats (F) are produced when both an ectopic ventricular beat and a normal SA node impulse activate the ventricles simultaneously, creating mixed QRS complexes that aid in distinguishing ventricular from supraventricular arrhythmias.

3.2 ECG Signal Representation and Classification

In order to capture patterns of heart activity, ECG signals are represented as 2D waveform data, where x-axis represents time and the y-axis represents voltage fluctuations. A CNN-based deep learning model is used to analyse these signals and differentiate between normal and pathological heartbeats by detecting changes in waveform shapes, peak intensities, and temporal intervals. Early identification of cardiac conditions and arrhythmias is made possible by this computerised classification.

To improve model performance preprocessing steps such as segmentation (heartbeat extraction using R-peak detection), normalisation (scaling to a fixed amplitude range), data augmentation (time-warping and jittering to improve generalisation), and signal denoising (removal of noise and baseline drift) are done. A softmax activation layer for classification, dimensionality reduction using max pooling layers, feature extraction using convolutional layers, dropout layers and batch normalisation for regularisation, and fully connected layers for feature aggregation make up the CNN architecture.

Adam optimiser is used to train the model. This is responsible for effective dynamic convergence by altering the learning rate. Precise arrhythmia categories and penalising inaccurate forecasts are prioritized by the categorical cross-entropy loss function which is responsible for assuring accurate multi-class classification. The model's performance is assessed using accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score. Sensitivity and specificity are warrantied to be balanced across all heartbeat classes.

4 System Architecture

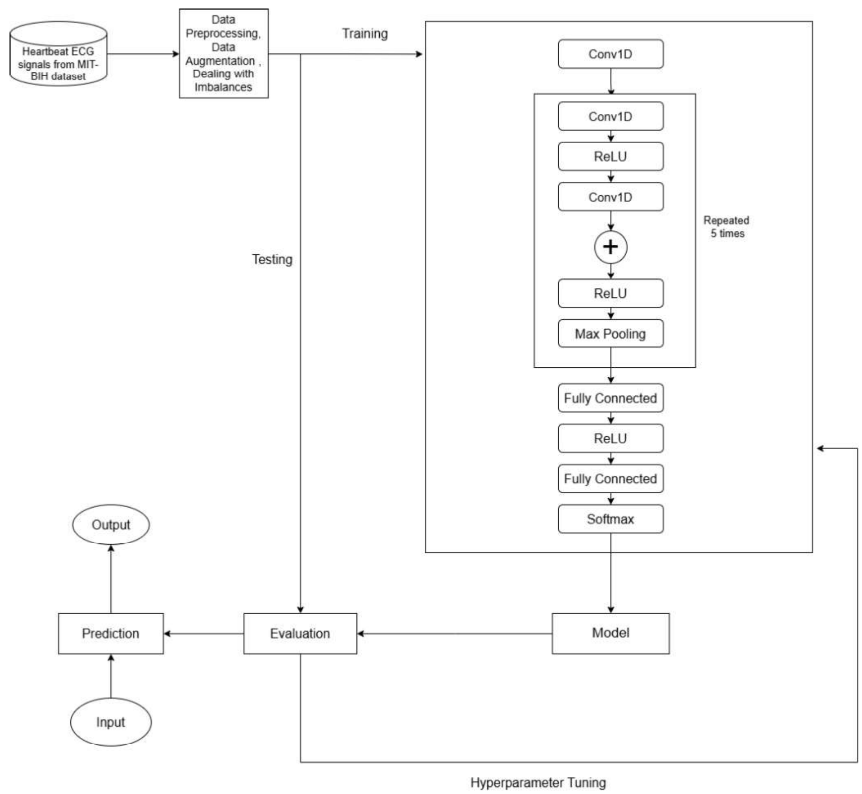

Fig. 1. Proposed architecture

4.1 ECG Data Processing and CNN-Based Classification

The model is trained using the Adam optimiser. The categorical cross-entropy loss function assures accurate multi-class classification by prioritising accurate forecasts. The model's performance is assessed using precision, accuracy, F1-score, and recall, guaranteeing that sensitivity and specificity are balanced across all heartbeat classes.

Data augmentation, normalisation, and noise reduction to enhance model generalisation are the preprocessing techniques used. Either under sampling majority classes or oversampling minority classes, methods like time shifting, signal scaling, and Gaussian noise addition aid in enhancing dataset variety are included in class imbalance management. Baseline wandering and high-frequency noise are discarded for improving feature quality and assuring a clean input for the model in the future.

Effective identification of spatial patterns in ECG waveforms is implemented by CNN with residual connections, that is used for classification. Conv1D layers process the signals, whereas preservation of information across layers and prevention of disappearing gradients are aided by residual connections. ReLU activation functions improve learning and max pooling decreases computational cost. After fully linked layers further refine retrieved information, a softmax activation layer that predicts ECG classifications is reached. After training, guaranteeing reliable ECG classification with good clinical reliability, the model's performance is assessed using the Accuracy, confusion matrices, precision, recall, and F1-score.

5 Experiment & Result

The MIT-BIH Arrhythmia Database provide annotated heartbeat recordings that show both healthy and abnormal rhythms as a standard for classifying ECGs. Non-ectopic (normal) beats, ventricular ectopic beats, supraventricular ectopic beats, fusion beats, and unknown beats are the five varied types of heartbeats. Improved generalization across pulse types is guaranteed by class imbalance correction, while model's performance is improved by preprocessing methods including noise reduction, normalization, and data augmentation..

5.1 Model Parameters

Parameter	Value
Model Architecture	CNN with Residual Connections
Dataset Used	MIT-BIH Arrhythmia Dataset
Number of Convolutional Layers	5
Pooling Layer	Max Pooling (5)
Optimizer	Adam
Metrics for evaluation	Precision, Accuracy, Recall, AUC-ROC, F1-Score

Table 1. Model Parameters

5.2 Performance Evaluation Across Arrhythmia Classes

Recall, F1-score, precision, and AUC-ROC, were used to evaluate the model's classification performance. This ensured accurate ECG-based arrhythmia diagnosis. High recall ensures accurate identification of arrhythmias, which attains 1.00 recall for normal beats, while false positives are lowered by high accuracy. A balanced performance in spite of class imbalances was indicated by the F1-score was which above 0.90 in every class. Additionally, the model's remarkable capability to differentiate between abnormal and normal heart rhythms was demonstrated by AUC-ROC scores above 0.93. Hence showing that it is reliable for clinical applications.

Table 2. Model Evaluation

CLASSES	PRECISION	RECALL	F1 SCORE	AUC
N	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.98
S	0.89	0.82	0.86	0.91
V	0.94	0.96	0.95	0.98
F	0.71	0.83	0.76	0.92
Q	1	0.98	0.99	0.99

5.3 Model Evaluation: CNN vs. LSTM for Arrhythmia Classification

A comparative study was conducted to evaluate the performance differences between the proposed Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) model and a Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) network for ECG-based arrhythmia diagnosis to determine the optimal deep learning model for real-time arrhythmia classification.

Table 3. Model Evaluation: CNN vs. LSTM for Arrhythmia Classification

Metric	CNN (Proposed Model)	LSTM
Accuracy	98%	95%
Precision	95.2%	78%
Recall	94.4%	79%
F1-Score	94.8%	77.6%

6 Conclusion

This work presents a deep learning-based method for automatic classification of arrhythmias from ECG signals. CNN with residual connections can classify normal and pathological heart rhythms with high precision by efficiently learning temporal and morphological information from ECG waveforms. Preprocessing methods like data augmentation and class imbalance treatment were implemented on the MIT-BIH Arrhythmia dataset to improve model generalisation. The optimisation of the classification was done using the Adam optimiser with an adaptive learning rate and the categorical cross-entropy loss function. With AUC values ranging from 0.93 to 1.00, performance evaluation using precision, accuracy, F1-score, recall, and AUC-ROC showed high classification capabilities, showing dependable distinction between arrhythmia types.

Though the results are positive, multiple limitations still exist. The improvement of the generalisability of the dataset across demographics can be done by including more varied samples. Real-time implementation and clinical validation is required for practical deployment. Further research can investigate attention mechanisms, hybrid deep learning architectures, and domain adaptation to increase classification accuracy. This work demonstrates how CNN-based models can be used to detect arrhythmias quickly, accurately, and non-invasively, improving cardiovascular care.

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