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"DEEP LEARNING-BASED VISUAL DIAGNOSIS SYSTEM FOR PEDIATRIC MALNUTRITION DETECTION"

***Prof. Gulhane V. M., Prof. Abhale B. A., Ahire Himanshu Sachin, Lokhande Ravindra Ramesh, Sonawane Shweta Somnath, Shah Zaveriya Naaz liyakat Ali**

S.N.D College of Engineering and Research Center, Yeola Savitribai Phule Pune University.

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***Corresponding Author: Prof. Gulhane V. M.**
S.N.D College of Engineering and Research Center, Yeola Savitribai Phule Pune University.

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ABSTRACT

Child malnutrition continues to be a significant global health challenge, particularly in developing and resource-constrained areas where access to timely healthcare services is limited. Detecting nutritional deficiencies at an early stage is important for preventing long-term health issues and supporting healthy physical and cognitive growth in children. This study proposes a Deep Learning-Based Visual Diagnosis System for Paediatric Malnutrition Detection that analyzes Paediatric facial and body images to identify indicators of malnutrition automatically.

The proposed approach applies Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) to learn and recognize visual characteristics linked to undernutrition and categorize children according to their nutritional status. To improve detection capability and overall performance, image preprocessing and feature extraction techniques are incorporated into the workflow. The system is designed as a rapid, non-invasive, and affordable screening method that can assist healthcare providers in diagnosis and continuous nutritional monitoring.

Experimental results indicate that deep learning models can successfully detect malnutrition-related visual patterns from Paediatric images with encouraging levels of accuracy. The proposed solution can contribute to expanding access to nutritional assessment and support early intervention strategies aimed at reducing malnutrition among children through intelligent healthcare technologies.

INTRODUCTION

Malnutrition is one of the major health challenges affecting children across the world,

particularly in developing and economically limited regions. Insufficient nutrition during early childhood can negatively influence immune function, physical growth, cognitive development, and overall well-being, leading to long-term health consequences. Therefore, early identification of malnutrition plays an important role in enabling timely intervention and improving child health outcomes.

Traditional methods used for malnutrition assessment generally depend on clinical examinations, anthropometric measurements, and laboratory analysis. These approaches often require trained healthcare professionals and medical infrastructure, which may not be easily accessible in rural and low-resource settings. As a result, there is an increasing need for efficient and accessible diagnostic solutions.

Recent developments in artificial intelligence and deep learning have introduced advanced methods for healthcare analysis and disease detection. Among these technologies, Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) have shown strong capabilities in image processing and feature recognition tasks. These techniques offer opportunities to detect visual indicators of nutritional deficiencies directly from Paediatric images.

This research proposes a Deep Learning-Based Visual Diagnosis System for Paediatric Malnutrition Detection that performs automated nutritional assessment using Paediatric facial and body images. The proposed system is designed to deliver a rapid, accurate, and non-invasive approach for early malnutrition screening. By leveraging deep learning algorithms, the model aims to support healthcare professionals in enhancing diagnostic efficiency and improving healthcare services for children.

Literature Review

Sr.no	Paper name	Author name	year
1	Malnutrition Detectionusing Convolutional Neural Network	Arun Raj Laksh-minarayanan, Sara-vananParthasarathy, Abdul Azeez Khan, PavaniB,Rajeswari V,K.Javubar Sathick	2021
2	Predictionof Malnutrition in Children Using Machine Learning	Shyleshwari M. Shetty, Swathi S., Upasana Chan-drashekar,Vaishnavi Kashyap,VibhaV. S.	2024
3	Detection of Mal-nutritionUsingIm-age Processing	Satyam Pandey, SamyakJain,Manoj Kumar Dixit	2024
4	PredictionofMal-nutritioninKidsbyIntegrating ResNet-50-Based DeepLearning TechniqueUsing Facial Images	S. Aanjankumar, Malathy Sathyamoorthy, Rajesh Kumar Dhanaraj, S. R. Surjit Kumar, S. Poonkuntran, AdilO.	2025

		Khadidos, ShitharthSelvarajan	
5	Nutri AI: AI-Powered Child Malnutrition Assessment in Low-Resource Environments	Misaal Khan, Shivang Agarwal, MayankVatsa, Richa Singh, Kuldeep Singh	2025
6	A DeepLearning Approach for Classifyingand Predicting childrenNutritional Status in Ethiopia UsingLSTM-FC NeuralNetworks	Getnet Bogale Be-gashaw, Temesgen Zewotir, Haile Mekonnen Fenta	2025
7	Machine Learning inPredicting Child Malnutrition: A Meta-Analysis of Demographic and HealthSurveys Data	Bhagyajyothi Rao, Muhammad Rashid, MdGulzarullHasan, Girish Thunga	2025
8	Early Detection of ChildMalnutrition Using Deep Learn-ing Techniques withFacialImage Analysis	H.Molla,F.Rah-man,R.Chowdhury	2024
9	Malnutrition Detection using Convolutional Neural Network (IEEE)	Arun Raj Laksh-minarayanan, Sara-vananParthasarathy, Abdul Azeez Khan, RajeswariV,K. JavubarSathick	2021
10	Deep Convolutional Models for Health Screening in Low-Resource Regions	K.S.Kumar and M. A. Rao	2025

Problem Definition

Evaluating the nutritional status of children continues to be a significant challenge, especially in regions with limited healthcare infrastructure and insufficient access to trained medical personnel. Traditional assessment approaches mainly depend on anthropometric measurements, clinical observations, and professional medical analysis, which can be labour-intensive and difficult to apply efficiently across large populations. Consequently, many cases of malnutrition remain undetected until the condition becomes severe.

The limited availability of quick and accessible nutritional screening methods often delays diagnosis and timely healthcare intervention. In addition, large-scale nutritional monitoring requires substantial resources and operational effort, creating difficulties in maintaining regular assessment programs in underserved areas. These challenges emphasize the need for innovative and technology-based solutions that improve the speed and accessibility of malnutrition detection.

To overcome these limitations, this research introduces a Deep Learning-Based Visual Diagnosis System for Paediatric Malnutrition Detection. The proposed system analyses Paediatric facial and body images to detect visual indicators related to nutritional deficiencies

and automatically determine nutritional status. The approach is intended to offer an efficient, non-invasive, and cost-effective screening method that supports healthcare professionals in early diagnosis and informed decision-making, ultimately contributing to improved child health and developmental outcomes.

Proposed system

1) Paediatric Image Dataset Acquisition

The proposed system collects Paediatric facial and body images from reliable and verified sources to create a structured dataset. The dataset includes images representing multiple nutritional categories and is used for model training and performance evaluation.

2) Automated Extraction of Visual Feature

The system applies deep learning techniques to automatically learn meaningful visual information from the input images. It identifies image patterns associated with physical appearance and facial characteristics that may indicate nutritional conditions.

3) Nutritional Condition Classification

Using the extracted features, the model estimates the nutritional status of children and categorizes cases accordingly. This automated process reduces dependency on manual assessment methods.

4) Smart Screening and Assessment Process

The proposed framework performs rapid image-based screening and generates assessment outputs in a short duration. This enables faster preliminary evaluation of nutritional health.

5) Clinical Decision Support Assistance

The prediction results can act as supplementary information for healthcare professionals during nutritional evaluation. This supports more efficient identification of children who may need additional medical attention.

6) Cost-Effective and Contact-Free Evaluation

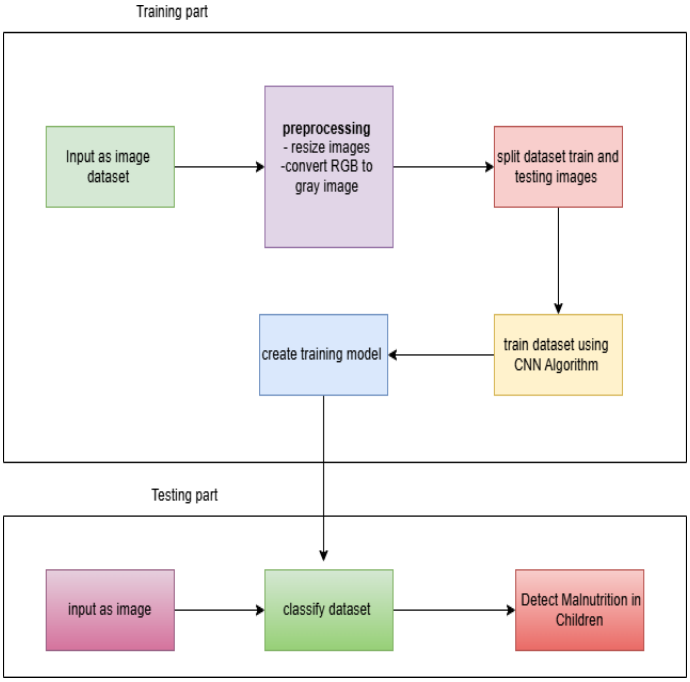
As the system mainly depends on visual image analysis, it lowers the requirement for specialized diagnostic equipment and direct physical examination, making the process economical and accessible.

7) Suitability for Rural and Resource-Limited Areas

The proposed approach can be implemented in locations with limited healthcare resources. Its image-driven assessment capability makes it practical for rural clinics and community-based healthcare initiatives.

8) Encouraging Early Detection and Intervention

Through faster recognition of possible nutritional deficiencies, the system promotes timely healthcare intervention, contributing to improved growth, development, and long-term health outcomes in children.



System Architecture

The proposed system architecture is developed to efficiently manage the complete image analysis pipeline, beginning with image acquisition and ending with nutritional status prediction. The architecture consists of multiple interconnected stages responsible for image preprocessing, automatic feature extraction, model learning, classification, and presentation of results. At the center of the framework, the Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) functions as the primary analytical component by converting raw image data into meaningful feature representations that support accurate nutritional assessment. The modular structure of the system enhances flexibility, scalability, and suitability for real-time implementation.

1. Image Data Acquisition:

The initial stage involves collecting Paediatric facial and body images from trusted sources such as public datasets, healthcare institutions, and medical organizations. The dataset includes labelled samples representing both healthy and malnourished conditions. Proper ethical practices and consent procedures are maintained during data collection.

2. Image Preprocessing and Preparation:

Before training, images are processed and standardized to improve model performance and consistency. The preprocessing phase includes:

- Resizing images to a fixed dimension (for example, 224 × 224 pixels) to maintain uniform input size.
- Converting images into grayscale format to reduce computational complexity where required.
- Applying normalization to scale pixel values into a standardized range.
- Performing data augmentation techniques to increase dataset diversity and improve model generalization.

3. Automatic Feature Extraction:

The CNN architecture automatically learns relevant visual information from image inputs. Convolution and pooling operations extract important characteristics such as shape, texture, contours, and facial patterns that may reflect nutritional status.

4. Deep Learning Model Training:

The processed dataset is used to train the CNN model to classify children according to nutritional condition. During training, optimization techniques such as Adam or Stochastic Gradient Descent (SGD) adjust model parameters and minimize prediction errors through backpropagation.

5. Model Testing and Performance Evaluation:

To validate system effectiveness, the dataset is divided into separate training and testing groups, commonly using an 80:20 ratio. Performance is assessed using evaluation metrics including accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score. Confusion matrices are further used to visualize and analyze classification outcomes.

6. Deployment and Real-Time Detection:

Once validated, the model is integrated into a front-end interface where healthcare person-nel can upload child images for instant analysis. The output is displayed as Healthy or Malnourished, along with a confidence percentage. The system can also store diagnostic results in a cloud database for continuous monitoring.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

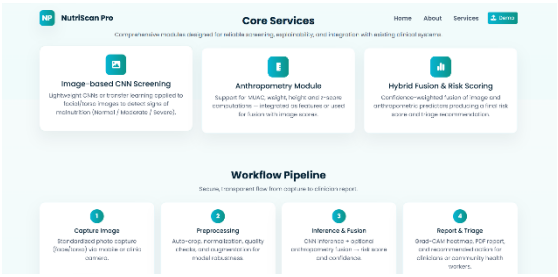


Figure2: Service Page.

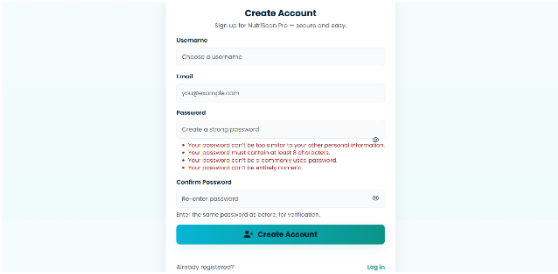


Figure3: Register Page.

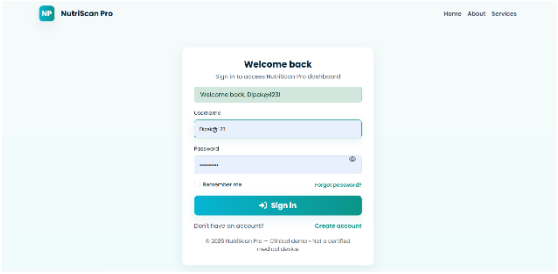


Figure4: LoginPage.

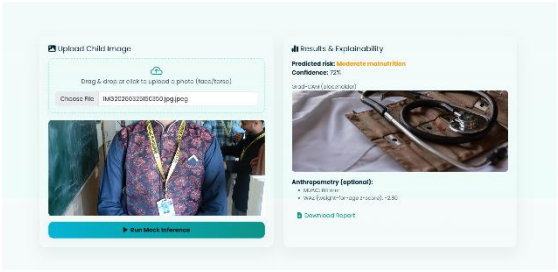


Figure5: Actual Output Page.

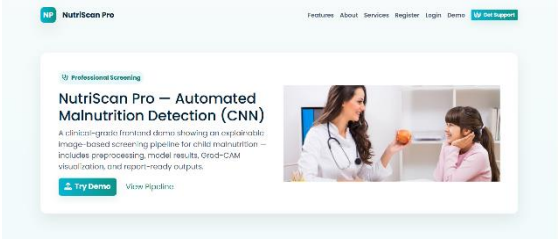


Figure6: Index Page.

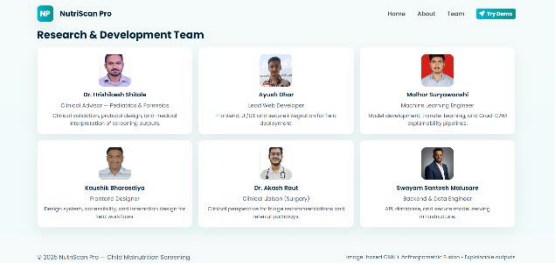


Figure7: About Page.

The figure represents the graphical user interface of the proposed Deep Learning-Based Visual Diagnosis System for Paediatric Malnutrition Detection. The interface is designed to provide an easy and efficient workflow for image-based nutritional assessment. Users can upload a Paediatric facial or body image through the image selection module, after which the selected image is displayed for confirmation before processing.

Once the image is loaded, the analysis process begins by selecting the "Run Inference" option. The trained deep learning model processes the input image and produces an assessment of the child's nutritional condition. The results section presents the predicted malnutrition risk category along with the corresponding confidence level generated by the model.

To improve transparency and usability, the system includes an explainability component that visually highlights the image features contributing to the prediction. This helps users and healthcare professionals better interpret the model's output and understand the decision-making process.

The interface also supports the inclusion of optional anthropometric indicators, such as Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) and Weight-for-Age Z-score (WAZ), to strengthen the nutritional evaluation process. In addition, a report generation function allows users to export and save assessment outcomes for future reference and clinical review.

Overall, the proposed interface provides a user-friendly, automated, and accessible platform for early detection of paediatric malnutrition through deep learning–based image analysis, supporting efficient nutritional screening and healthcare decision-making.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this project successfully developed and implemented an intelligent system for detecting malnutrition in children using Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs). The primary aim of the study was to create an automated, non-invasive, and image-based framework capable of identifying nutritional deficiencies through analysis of Paediatric facial

images. The proposed objective was effectively achieved through the application of deep learning techniques.

The developed system utilizes CNN-based architecture to automatically learn and interpret visual patterns associated with nutritional conditions. Through structured stages including image preprocessing, model development, training, and performance evaluation, the system demonstrated strong effectiveness in differentiating between healthy and malnourished children with promising accuracy.

Compared with conventional anthropometric assessment approaches, the proposed method reduces reliance on manual measurements and minimizes the need for extensive clinical involvement. Additionally, the automated workflow improves screening speed and supports more efficient nutritional assessment. Overall, this research highlights the potential of deep learning technologies in enhancing early malnutrition detection and contributing to improved Paediatric healthcare services.

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