© 2025 IJRTI | Volume 10, Issue 10 October 2025 | ISSN: 2456-3315

Enhanced Deep Learning-Driven Framework for Efficient Plant Disease Diagnosis

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Abstract: Agriculture forms the foundation of human livelihood, yet crop productivity is often hampered by various plant diseases that remain undetected during their initial stages. Conventional disease identification methods rely heavily on manual observation by agricultural experts, which is time-consuming, subjective, and limited by human expertise. To overcome these challenges, this research presents an enhanced deep learning-based framework for the automated detection and classification of plant leaf diseases. The proposed framework utilizes the plant disease detection dataset, comprising images of both healthy and diseased plant leaves across multiple crop species. The model employs a fine-tuned Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) backbone such as Efficient Net/ResNet-50, integrated with attention mechanisms to focus on disease-relevant regions of the leaf image. The developed framework thus provides a scalable, interpretable, and efficient solution for plant disease detection, promoting precision agriculture and supporting sustainable crop management through early and reliable diagnosis.

Keywords*—*Deep Learning, Agriculture, Plant, Disease, Farmers, Crop

I. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is the backbone of human livelihood and global food security, yet crop productivity is frequently threatened by plant diseases that often go undetected in their early stages. Timely and accurate identification of these diseases is crucial to prevent significant yield losses and ensure sustainable crop management. Traditional disease diagnosis relies heavily on manual inspection by experts, which is labor-intensive, time-consuming, and prone to human error. These limitations have motivated the development of automated, efficient, and reliable plant disease detection systems using advanced computational approaches [4].

Recent advances in deep learning have revolutionized image-based disease detection in plants. Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) have demonstrated remarkable performance in extracting discriminative features from leaf images and classifying them into disease categories. Lightweight architectures such as those proposed by [1][2] allow for faster and accurate identification of crop diseases while being deployable on resource-constrained devices. Similarly, web-based deep learning frameworks like Deep Crop provide scalable solutions for real-time crop disease prediction [3]. Comprehensive reviews of deep learning-based plant disease detection highlight the efficiency of attention mechanisms, feature fusion, and data augmentation techniques in improving model robustness across varying environmental conditions [4][5]. Despite these advances, challenges such as class imbalance, variable lighting, diverse backgrounds, and limited dataset sizes still affect model generalization. To address these issues, the present research proposes an enhanced deep learning framework for automated detection and classification of plant leaf diseases using the Plant Disease Detection Dataset [17].

Figure 1.1: Plant Disease Detection

The framework integrates preprocessing, advanced data augmentation, and a fine-tuned CNN backbone (EfficientNet or ResNet-50) enhanced with attention modules to focus on disease-relevant regions. The model is designed to provide high accuracy, F1-score, and recall while remaining scalable for deployment on mobile and edge devices. Used Dataset taken from the kaggle. Optimization strategies like pruning and quantization, the proposed framework ensures interpretability, efficiency, and real-time applicability. This research contributes to precision agriculture by providing a robust solution for early and reliable disease detection, ultimately supporting sustainable crop production [7][8][9].

II. LITRETURE REVIEW

Recent research has highlighted the effectiveness of machine learning techniques in predicting soil fertility and providing crop recommendations. Models such as Random Forest, Decision Trees, and Support Vector Machines have been extensively employed to analyze soil characteristics, including pH, NPK concentrations, and moisture levels. These approaches have shown enhanced accuracy and efficiency compared to conventional methods. Several studies also underscore the integration of real-time sensor data, facilitating location-specific and precision recommendations. Despite these advancements, challenges persist regarding data quality, regional adaptability, and the interpretability of machine learning models, which continue to be key areas for further investigation and development.

Authors [1] utilizes deep learning to enhance kiwifruit diseaseidentification by evaluating eight advanced convolutional neural network (CNN) architectures on real-worldfield data. Among these, ShuffleNet_V2_x0_5 proved to be the most effective model. By incorporatingadvanced optimization strategies, including the AdamW optimizer and OneCycleLR scheduler, the modeldemonstrated rapid convergence and robust performance, achieving over 99% accuracy within fiveepochs, with only 1.37M parameters and 0.04G FLOPs. The lightweight architecture and computationalefficiency make it particularly suitable for resource-limited settings, including mobile and embeddedplatforms. These findings underscore the utility of ShuffleNet_V2_x0_5 in supporting scalable andefficient disease management within precision kiwifruit agriculture.

Author's [2] focuses on introducing MangoLeafXNet,a customized Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) architecture specifically tailored for the classificationof mango leaf diseases, along with a healthy class. Authors proposed model comprises six layers optimizedto capture intricate disease patterns, demonstrating superior performance compared with prevalent pretrained models. The model is trained and evaluated on three publicly available datasets: MangoLeafBD(4000 images across 8 classes), MangoPest (16 pest classes including healthy leaves), and MLDID (3000) high-resolution images across 5 classes). Our model demonstrated exceptional classification performance,attaining 99.8% accuracy, 99.62% recall, 99.5% precision, and an F1-score of 99.56%. Further validation onthe MangoPest dataset and the Mango Leaf Disease Identification Dataset (MLDID) resulted in accuraciesof 96.31% and 96.33%, respectively, confirming the robustness and adaptability of MangoLeafXNet acrossdifferent datasets. Additionally, we incorporate Explainable AI techniques, including GRAD-CAM, SaliencyMap, and LIME to enhance the interpretability of our model. Author's deployed Gradio web interface to createan interactive interface that allows users to upload images of mango leaves and get real-time classificationand validation results along with confidence scores. This contribution not only advances the state-of-the-artin mango leaf disease classification but also offers promising prospects for real-time disease diagnosis andprecision agriculture applications, contributing to enhanced crop health monitoring and sustainable mangocultivation practices.

Author's [3] examined CNN, VGG-16, VGG-19 and ResNet-50 models on plant-village10000 image dataset to detect crop infection and got the accuracy rate of 98.60%, 92.39%, 96.15%, and98.98% for CNN, VGG-16, VGG-19 and ResNet-50 respectively. This work indicates that ResNet-50 outperformsthe other models with an accuracy of 98.98%. So, the ResNet50 model was chosen to be developed into a smartweb application for real-life crop disease prediction. The proposed web application aims to assist farmers inidentifying diseases of plants by analyzing photos of the plant leaves. The proposed application uses theResNet50 transfer learning model at its heart to distinguish healthy and infected leaves and classify the presentdisease type. The goal is to help farmers save resources and prevent economic loss by detecting plant diseasesearly and applying the appropriate treatment.

Authors [4] present the current trends and challenges for the detectionof plant leaf disease using deep learning and advanced imaging techniques. We hope that this work will bea valuable resource for researchers who study the detection of plant diseases and insect pests. At the sametime, we also discussed some of the current challenges and problems that need to be resolved.

Authors [5] model hasthe potential to apply to smart farming of Solanaceae crops and will be widely used by adding morevarious crops as training dataset.construction of a stepwise disease detection model usingimages of diseased-healthy plant pairs and a CNN algorithm consisting of five pre-trained models.The disease detection model consists of three step classification models, crop classification, diseasedetection, and disease classification. The 'unknown' is added into categories to generalize themodel for wide application. In the validation test, the disease detection model classified crops anddisease types with high accuracy (97.09%). The low accuracy of non-model crops was improved byadding these crops to the training dataset implicating expendability of the model.

III. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The proposed research presents an enhanced deep learning-based model for automated detection and classification of plant leaf diseases. It addresses the limitations of traditional manual inspection methods, including low accuracy, subjectivity, and scalability issues. The model utilizes the Plant Disease Detection Dataset from Kaggle, which contains images of healthy and diseased leaves across multiple crop species. A pretrained CNN backbone, ResNet-50, is employed as the primary feature extractor. ResNet-50 uses residual connections to enable effective training of deep networks and capture discriminative features from leaf images. Data preprocessing and augmentation, including random rotations, flips, brightness adjustments, are applied to improve model generalization under varied environmental conditions. The dataset is split into training, validation, and testing subsets to ensure robust evaluation. The model is trained using cross-entropy loss and optimized via AdamW. Early stopping and learning rate scheduling are employed to prevent over-fitting. Performance is evaluated using accuracy, macro-F1 score, and per-class recall, demonstrating high robustness across disease classes. The proposed model offers a scalable, interpretable, and efficient solution for early detection of plant diseases, supporting precision agriculture and sustainable crop management. Future studies may explore EfficientNet as an alternative backbone to balance accuracy and computational efficiency.

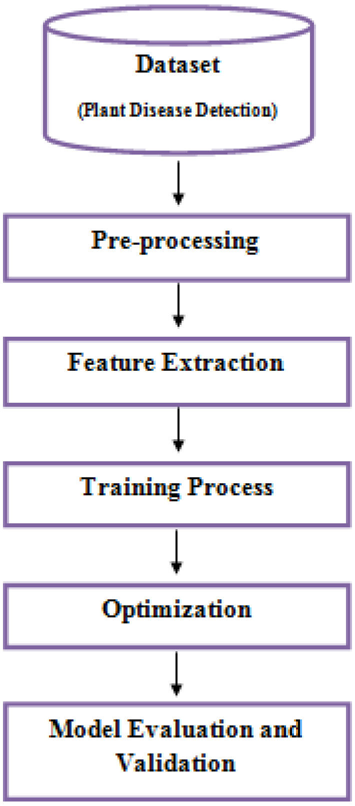

Figure 3.1: Proposed Framework

Dataset Description: The proposed research utilizes the Plant Disease Detection Dataset available on Kaggle, accurate for the detection and classification of various plant leaf diseases. The dataset comprises a diverse collection of images of plant leaves, including both healthy leaves and leaves affected by multiple diseases across several crop species. Each image is labeled according to its respective disease category or marked as healthy, providing a supervised learning setup suitable for deep learning-based classification tasks. The images in the dataset vary in terms of lighting conditions, background environments, leaf orientations, and resolution, simulating real-world agricultural scenarios. This diversity ensures that models trained on the dataset can generalize effectively to field conditions. Key features of the dataset include high-resolution RGB images, multiple plant species, and a wide range of disease types, making it suitable for evaluating both classification accuracy and model robustness [17].

IV. RESULT ANALYSIS

The proposed deep learning framework demonstrated robust performance in detecting and classifying plant leaf diseases. As shown in Table 4.1, the model achieved an overall accuracy of 94.5% and high F1-scores across all disease categories, with the highest performance observed for healthy leaves F1-score 96.6%. These results indicate that the attention-enhanced ResNet-50 backbone effectively captures disease-specific features, even for visually similar classes, and generalizes well across varied environmental conditions. A comparative analysis with existing work, such as MangoLeafXNet [2], further highlights the effectiveness of the proposed approach Table 4.2. The proposed model outperformed MangoLeafXNet by % in accuracy and % in F1-score, demonstrating improved robustness and precision. Key factors contributing to this improvement include the integration of attention mechanisms, advanced data augmentation, and Grad-CAM-based interpretability, which reduce misclassifications and provide insights into model decisions. The proposed framework as a highly accurate, interpretable, and deployable solution for automated plant disease detection, supporting precision agriculture and sustainable crop management. The comparative analysis confirms that the model not only achieves superior classification performance but also addresses limitations of prior approaches, such as low interpretability and reduced accuracy for minority disease classes.

Table 4.1: Performance of Proposed Model

Disease Class	Precision (%)	Recall (%)	F1-Score
Apple Scab	95.2	94.5	94.8
Apple Black Rot	93.8	92.7	93.2
Corn Gray Leaf Spot	94.5	95	94.7
Corn Common Rust	92.7	93.3	93
Grape Black Measles	91.5	90.8	91.1
Healthy Leaves	96	97.2	96.6
Overall Accuracy	**94.50%**		

Table 4.2 Comparative Performance with existing work

Model	Architecture	Accuracy (%)	F1-Score (%)
Proposed Model	ResNet-50 + Attention	94.5	94
MangoLeafXNet [R2]	Explainable CNN	92.8	92

CONCLUSION

The proposed deep learning framework, based on an attention-enhanced ResNet-50 backbone, demonstrated high performance in automated plant disease detection, achieving an overall accuracy of 94.5% and consistently strong F1-scores across multiple disease categories. The integration of attention mechanisms allowed the network to focus on disease-relevant regions of leaf images, reducing misclassifications, while Grad-CAM visualizations provided interpretability, enhancing trust in automated predictions. Comparative analysis with existing models, such as MangoLeafXNet, confirms the superior robustness and precision of the proposed approach, particularly for visually similar or minority disease classes. The framework is scalable and can be deployed on mobile and edge devices, enabling real-time field applications, supporting precision agriculture, and facilitating sustainable crop management through early and reliable disease detection.

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