

A Pilot Study of Automated Predictive Models for Retinal Diseases

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Publication Date: 2025/08/16

Abstract: Diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, Central Serous Retinopathy (CSR), age-related macular degeneration (AMD), and retinitis are primary causes of visual diseases worldwide. As such, several types of retinal disease predictive or diagnostic models are designed to prevent vision loss or impairment. Since correct prediction is crucial for treatment, a survey of existing retinal disease predictive or diagnostic models was conducted, and algorithms used to predict retinal disease were analyzed. The survey showed that despite improvements with the incorporation of machine learning, many automated retinal disease diagnosis systems still rely heavily on traditional models for classification tasks. Thus, limiting the retinal disease SVM models' performance in handling complex, high-dimensional retinal images. Therefore, this study incorporates a Convolutional Neural Network-based framework to directly learn discriminative features from raw retinal images without manual intervention to predict kinds of retinal diseases. In the future, the efficiency of this approach will be demonstrated by developing and implementing a CNN-based retinal disease predictive system for diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, CSR, AMD, and retinitis, and evaluating it for real-world clinical use.

Keywords: Retinitis, Central Serous Retinopathy, Retinal Diseases, Machine Learning, Convolutional Neural Network.

How to Cite: Oboro, Enifome; Akazue, Maureen (2025). A Pilot Study of Automated Predictive Models for Retinal Diseases . *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 10(8), 423-430.
<https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/25aug280>

I. INTRODUCTION

Advances in technology have offered solutions, forecast the occurrence of events, and improve the living standard for humans ([1] - [4]). Several works ranging from security ([5] - [10]); preemptive ([11] - [14]); forecast models ([15] - [17]); IoT devices ([18] - [24]); education and business models ([25] - [28]) have being designed to solve or mitigate problems.

Furthermore, recent advancements in disease prediction use technology and machine learning to solve human challenges ([29] [30], and the design of automated disease diagnosis has witnessed advancements with the integration of machine learning techniques. All aspects of medical diagnostic and predictive systems have been developed ([31] - [33]), and retinal diseases are one of such ([34] - [37]).

Retinal diseases cause vision loss, and with the rising utilization of OCT in medical science, automated predictive system holds great potential for reliably and successfully detecting retinal diseases. Hence, several types of retinal disease predictive or diagnostic models are designed to significantly prevent permanent vision loss [38]. Since correct prediction is crucial for treatment, this paper surveyed existing retinal disease predictive or diagnostic models, and

algorithms used were analyzed to expose their flaws and introduce a CNN-based framework that directly learns discriminative features from raw retinal images without manual intervention to forecast different types of retinal diseases such as CSR, AMD, diabetic retinopathy (DR), glaucoma, and retinitis.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

[39] developed a model that applied deep learning to diagnose the retinal sickness condition, with goals to eliminate diagnostic errors from manual image scrutiny and enhance efficiency and accuracy for medical professionals. Future initiatives include developing an online OCT image diagnosis tool and improving model performance with hybrid algorithms like VGG-16 and ResNet-50.

[40] automated the identification of retinal disease using support vector machine that analyzes OCT images and fundus image. The SVM models' performance in handling complex, high-dimensional retinal images is limited compared to deep learning models like CNNs. The developed SVM based algorithm effectively detects the central serous retinopathy, and does not integrate real-time image acquisition and instant prediction functionality.

Another study trained their model on 84,568 retinal OCT images from publicly accessible sources representing the four disease types. The developed model was not trained with fundus photography image, and UFI fundus imaging [41].

[42] conducted a comprehensive review on Retinal Disease Detection. They automated the grading of eye abnormalities using techniques like DCNNs and ViTs, and evaluated the model using OCT and fundus. Future directions include exploring ensemble CNNs for better performance and improving model explainability for clinical adoption.

[43] applied an Artificial Intelligence for the prediction and Screening of eye diseases and analyzed it using ophthalmological data, particularly fundus images and OCT scans on major retinal diseases like DR and AMD. Challenges included securing large datasets and ensuring reliable AI-driven diagnostic accuracy.

[44] employed a VGGNetn advanced detection of DR using fundus cameras. There was the prevalence of undetected DR cases in remote areas.

[45] reviewed and analyzed models using methods with CNN, SVM and MLP as feature selection and classifier methods. Challenges include the complexity of recognizing disease symptoms.

[46] reviewed and analyzed AI's application in a wide range of retinal illnesses. Challenges in integrating AI into clinical practice include the "black box phenomenon".

[47] provided an exhaustive review of detecting retinal diseases through medical image analysis. The authors surveyed CNNs impact on retinal disease diagnosis, especially in detecting DR, glaucoma, and AMD. However, model generalization in clinical settings were identified for further attention.

[48] applied deep CNNs for separation tasks and classified DR and macular edema using various design structures. Also, [49] [50] reviewed the application of deep learning techniques in medical image analysis,

[51] reviewed various CNN models and pre-processing techniques used for early DR detection.

[52] utilized CNNs to analyze images. However, image resolution, dataset variability, and the necessity to improve model generalizability were identified. [53] further applied the use of CNN in fundus images.

[54] reviewed the performance of different models, including CNNs and Recurrent Neural Networks (RNNs), for detecting various retinal diseases. Their study found that CNNs achieved the highest performance in classification tasks. However, challenges such as the need for a larger diversity of data, improving model interpretability, and reducing the dependency on high-quality labeled datasets were identified.

[55] discussed CNNs, ResNets, and GANs architectures in the predictions of DR, AMD, and glaucoma. Their findings suggest that deep learning has significantly improved diagnostic accuracy, but challenges such as overfitting, lack of clear understanding remain significant hurdles.

[56] reviewed various CNN architectures and their effectiveness in detecting DR and AMD. Their findings indicated that CNNs has improved classification accuracy. However, they noted the lack of standardized datasets.

[57] explored the use of deep convolutional neural networks (CNNs) for the early diagnosis of retinal diseases. Their findings showed that CNNs can effectively detect early signs of diseases such as DR and AMD. However, challenges relating to data labeling, and computational complexity during model training were identified.

[58] reviewed deep learning techniques for retinal disease detection using OCT images. However, the complexity of OCT image interpretation was noted.

[59] discussed the use of various models for retinal imaging, including CNNs and hybrid models. The findings suggest that deep learning improves diagnostic accuracy, especially in detecting retinal diseases. However, computational costs were the challenge identified.

[60] and [61] reviewed and evaluated various CNN-based methods and discussed their performance. The findings revealed that CNNs provide high accuracy in detecting diabetic retinopathy. However, challenges such as dataset imbalance, and lack of interpretability, were identified.

[62] surveyed different architectures of CNNs used for detecting diseases such as DR, AMD, and glaucoma. The findings established that CNNs have improved early predictive capabilities.

Several authors ([63] - [68]) highlighted various CNN-based models and their performance in detecting DR and AMD. They found that deep learning techniques have demonstrated significant potential for prediction accuracy. However, the need for specialized expertise to interpret results, ensuring model robustness in clinical environments, and overcoming the complexity of OCT image analysis were highlighted.

[69] study focused on the local binary pattern, SVM and KNN classifiers were used for images dataset classification. The gap identified was missed classification.

[70] developed an AI-based multi-label classification model. Their SURF-GBC model outperformed the conventional methods which are time-consuming and require expert intervention.

[71] developed an automated deep learning-based system for diagnosing retinal diseases using UFI, which offer a comprehensive view of critical ocular structures. The method used involves image pre-processing, data augmentation, and classification using ResNet152, Vision

Transformer. The Key challenges include automating diagnosis while maintaining precision, with the system effectively reducing the need for manual interpretation.

[72] developed an automated system for classify multiple eye illnesses. The method used includes image pre-processing and a Multilevel Glowworm Swarm CNN. This study demonstrated that CNN usage is required in retinal disease early prediction.

[73] improved retinal disease prediction by introducing a hybrid model and a web-based diagnostic tool. The method used is the development of RetiNet, a fusion model combining ResNet50 and DenseNet121, trained on retinal dataset. However, the addition of a web application will enhance clinical usability and decision support for ophthalmologists.

[74] study automated a classification method leveraging on fine-tuning techniques to enhance accuracy while maintaining computational efficiency. The study highlighted its potential for clinical integration and its superiority over other ensemble methods.

[75] proposed a diagnostic CNN support system to detect twelve major retinal conditions. Findings are that retinal disorders have similar manifestations, making manual diagnosis complex. The proposed multi-class classification model proved its utility as a theragnostic tool in ophthalmology.

[76] study enhanced the detection of Choroidal Neovascularization and other causes of eye problem using deep learning techniques. The method used involved preprocessing OCT retinal images and training of multiple CNN models with varying hidden layer configurations for classification into four disease categories.

[77] also proposed the use of AI tools. They advocated for a design approach that prioritizes transparency and user trust key components for AI integration in real-world medical workflows.

[78] utilized bagging techniques with KNN as base estimator to tackled the problem of misclassified cataracts and wrong cataract prediction, which can result in incorrect treatments and wasted resources. Their research challenges include the difficulty in quickly detecting and accurately classifying cataracts, even for experienced opticians.

[79] applied CNN to extract features, detect and differentiate between retinal diseases. Challenges include ensuring model reliability in detecting various retinal diseases from OCT images.

➤ *Summary of Previous works, Achievements and Knowledge Gap*

Several work on using CNN Model to Classify OCT Images were carried out ([80] - [81]). Different datasets were employed when using deep learning ([82] - [83]). But, some of the existing systems did not integrate real-time image acquisition and instant prediction functionality, making it less

practical for immediate clinical application or live screenings. Furthermore, the models that used SVM requires manual feature extraction, which may miss complex patterns that a deep learning model like CNN could automatically learn from raw images. Several other models that used deep learning were restricted to detecting types of retinal disease using either OCT images or Fundus images, or image captured via webcam, limiting its usefulness in diagnosing multiple retinal diseases simultaneously.

The new proposed model is designed to precisely detect and categorize six retinal conditions, namely DR, Glaucoma, Central Serous Retinopathy, Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD), Retinitis, and healthy eyes, using OCT images, fundus images, and image captured via webcam.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The system is designed to use CNN to classify retina conditions into four categories: Normal, CSR, Glaucoma, and DR. This intelligent classification is achieved through a CNN model trained on a labeled dataset of retina images. Analysis of the developed system reveals its effectiveness in improving early diagnosis, reducing dependence on manual screening, and increasing accessibility to ophthalmological care, particularly in under-resourced regions. The core of the system relies on the ability of CNNs to extract visual features, such as blood vessel patterns, and localized lesions from high-resolution images. A graphical interface that allows image capture via webcam is used to enhance usability. The backend utilizes the TensorFlow/Keras frameworks for training and prediction.

The method employed in the design of the retinal disease prediction model is based on a CNN that can process and analyze visual imagery.

➤ *The CNN Architecture Model Consists of Several Key Layers (see figure 1):*

- *Convolutional Layers:*

These layers apply learnable filters to extract important patterns like blood vessel structure, optic disc features, and pathological anomalies.

- *Activation Function (ReLU):*

Introduced to add non-linearity and ensure better learning.

- *Pooling Layers (MaxPooling):*

For reducing spatial dimensions, preventing overfitting, and enhancing computational efficiency.

- *Fully Connected Layers:*

For mapping the extracted features to the corresponding output disease classes.

- *Softmax Output Layer:*

Produces the final probability distribution over the four target classes.

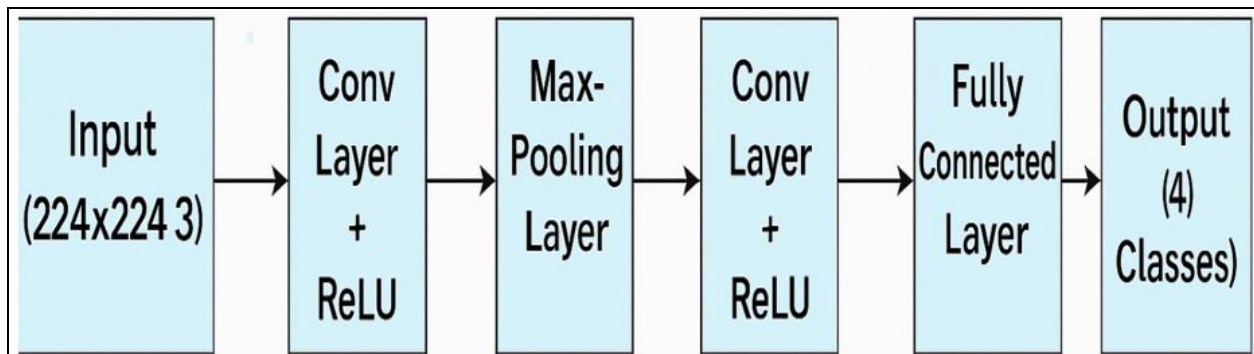


Fig 1 CNN Architecture

IV. RETINAL DISEASE CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

In this retinal disease classification system, the classification is typically done using a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN). Here's how it works for your system (see figure 2):

➤ CNN Architecture:

The CNN is used to automatically learn various patterns and structures related to conditions like glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, Central Serous Retinopathy, and normal retina.

➤ Model Training:

- CNN model is trained with labeled data (images of retina from the four categories: Normal, Glaucoma, Diabetic Retinopathy, Central Serous Retinopathy).
- During training, the model learns to associate the features extracted from the images to their corresponding category.

➤ Classification Process:

Once trained, CNN model will classify new retina image (e.g., whether it's Normal, Glaucoma, Diabetic Retinopathy, or Central Serous Retinopathy). The CNN typically does this by passing the image through figure 1 and then outputting a probability distribution for each class to enable selection of highest probability distribution.

➤ Activation Function:

The softmax activation function is used to ensure that the output is a probability distribution over the classes.

The high-level architecture of the developed model in Figure 2 provides an overview of key components. It illustrates how data flows from image capture, through preprocessing, to prediction using CNN. This model highlights the integration of automated retinal disease classification and prediction.

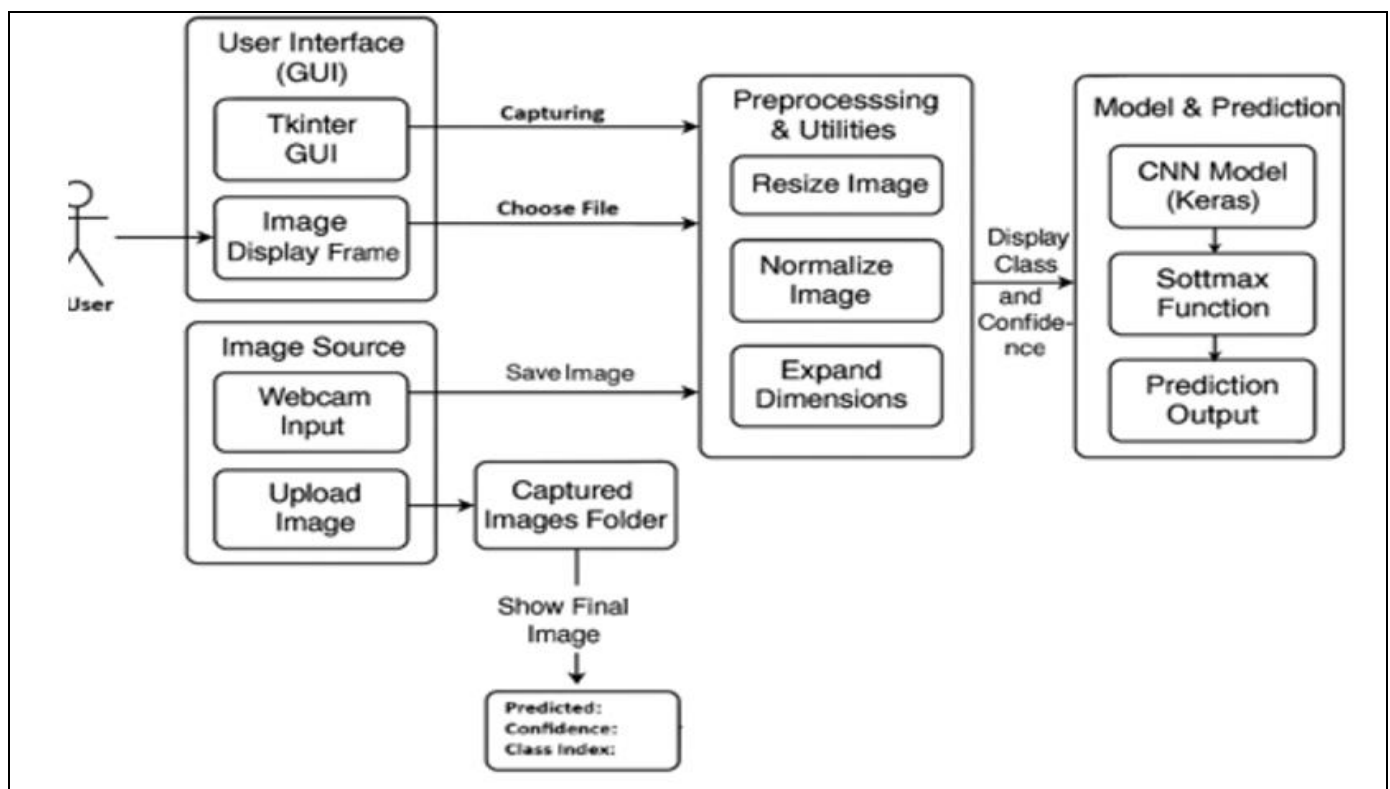


Fig 2 High Level Architecture of the Developed System

V. CONCLUSION

The features of the incorporated components used in the proposed model will significantly enhance detection accuracy, operational efficiency, and scalability for real-world clinical use because of their functionalities.

In this study, the combination of the CNN component into the Retinal disease framework has addressed the problem of SVM models' performance in handling complex, high-dimensional retinal images and provided multiple ways to collect images. The future work will discuss the implementation and evaluation of this model.

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