iJRASET
International Journal For Research in
Applied Science and Engineering Technology

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH

IN APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Volume: 13 **Issue:** III **Month of publication:** March 2025

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22214/ijraset.2025.67626

International Journal for Research in Applied Science & Engineering Technology (IJRASET)
ISSN: 2321-9653; IC Value: 45.98; SJ Impact Factor: 7.538
Volume 13 Issue III Mar 2025- Available at www.ijraset.com

AI-Powered Skin Disease Detection Using Hybrid Learning Techniques

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Abstract: Early detection of skin diseases is crucial for effective treatment, yet accessibility to dermatologists remains limited. This research presents a conversational AI chatbot that integrates ResNet-18 for image classification and natural language processing (NLP) for symptom-based diagnosis. The system allows users to upload images or describe symptoms, providing a preliminary diagnosis and recommendations. A fine-tuned ResNet-18 model classifies skin disease images, while an NLP-based decision tree model processes textual descriptions. The chatbot is deployed using a Flask-based API, integrating Google Dialogflow for real-time interactions. Experimental results demonstrate a classification accuracy of 94.1%, validating the system's capability as an assistive tool in dermatological assessments. Future enhancements include dataset expansion, improved model generalization, and integration with telemedicine services to enhance real-world applicability.
Keywords: chatbot, decision tree, dialogflow, flask, ResNet-18

I. INTRODUCTION

Skin diseases affect millions of people worldwide, ranging from mild conditions like eczema and acne to more severe diseases such as melanoma and bacterial infections. Early and accurate diagnosis is crucial for effective treatment, but access to dermatologists is often limited, particularly in remote or underserved areas. Many individuals delay seeking medical consultation due to cost, time constraints, or lack of awareness, leading to complications that could have been prevented with early intervention. With advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI), deep learning, and Natural Language Processing (NLP), automated diagnostic tools have become a viable solution for assisting in early disease detection. Conversational AI chatbots powered by ResNet-18 for image recognition and NLP for symptom analysis can bridge this gap by offering users a preliminary diagnosis based on uploaded images and described symptoms.

This research presents the development of a Conversational Image Recognition Chatbot that enables users to interact with an AI system capable of analyzing skin conditions. By leveraging a ResNet-18 model for image-based classification and an NLP-powered chatbot for text-based symptom evaluation, the system provides users with probable diagnoses and recommendations. The goal is to improve accessibility to dermatological assessments and encourage early medical consultation when necessary.

The chatbot is designed to process both visual and textual inputs, allowing for a more comprehensive evaluation of skin conditions. This dual-approach enhances the chatbot's reliability, making it a valuable tool for users who may not have immediate access to professional medical assistance. Additionally, the system continuously improves through user feedback and data-driven learning, ensuring that it evolves to provide more accurate predictions over time.

This paper explores the methodology behind the chatbot's development, including data collection, model training, system workflow, and evaluation metrics. It also discusses the challenges, limitations, and future directions for enhancing AI-powered dermatology solutions. Early detection of skin diseases is crucial for effective treatment, yet access to dermatologists can be limited. AI-driven chatbots offer a potential solution by providing instant preliminary diagnoses based on images and symptom descriptions. This research presents a chatbot system that integrates computer vision and conversational AI to assist users in identifying skin conditions and recommending next steps.

II. LITERATURE SURVEY

Artificial intelligence has been increasingly applied to dermatology, enhancing diagnostic accuracy and improving patient accessibility. Edwards et al. explored ontology-based chatbot technology for differential medical diagnosis, highlighting how AI-driven chatbots can aid in clinical assessments by interpreting symptoms and providing preliminary diagnoses [1]. Kawahara and Hamarneh investigated the effectiveness of CNN-based dermatological image classification, demonstrating that machine learning models can achieve performance comparable to human dermatologists in identifying various skin conditions [2].

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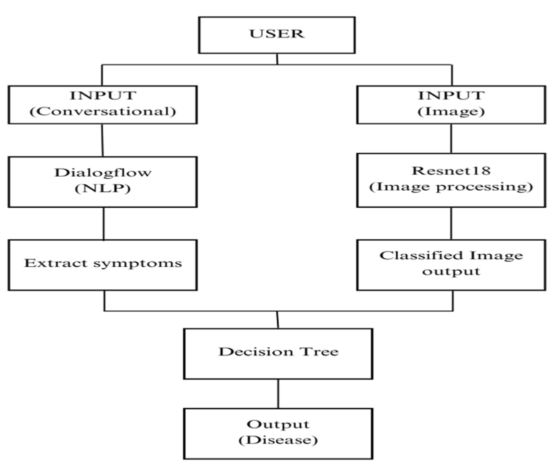
Deep learning techniques have been widely utilized in dermatology, as demonstrated by Sonntag et al., who developed an interactive deep learning system capable of diagnosing malignant skin lesions, reinforcing the role of AI in clinical decision-making and early detection [3]. Sasseville et al. examined the role of conversational AI in health promotion and patient engagement, emphasizing the importance of chatbot usability and its impact on healthcare accessibility [4]. Li et al. conducted a study on AI-based dermatological image analysis, showcasing advancements in deep learning algorithms for more precise skin disease detection [5]. Wang and Zhao analyzed the feasibility of chatbot-based teledermatology, showing that AI-powered chatbots could provide timely and accurate preliminary assessments while reducing the workload of healthcare professionals [6]. Patel et al. reviewed deep learning approaches for skin lesion classification, outlining key challenges in dataset diversity, model generalization, and interpretability [7]. Cheng et al. conducted a systematic review of AI chatbots for dermatological assessments, identifying gaps in ssmodel performance and ethical considerations regarding user data privacy [8].

Recent advancements in mobile health applications have also contributed to AI-driven dermatology. Zhang et al. explored mobile-based AI solutions for skin disease detection, identifying challenges in integrating chatbot interfaces with deep learning models for seamless user interaction [9]. Ding and Xu discussed AI advancements in dermatology, emphasizing the need for federated learning techniques to ensure secure data sharing while maintaining model accuracy [10].

Several studies have examined the integration of NLP with deep learning for improved chatbot interactions. Park et al. studied the effectiveness of conversational AI in dermatology, showing how NLP-driven chatbots could enhance the diagnostic process by analyzing user-reported symptoms alongside image-based assessments [11]. Liu et al. provided a comprehensive review of AI-driven dermatological applications, highlighting the role of deep learning in medical imaging and symptom-based analysis [12]. Chen and Wang evaluated AI chatbots in healthcare, reinforcing their potential in improving patient communication and engagement [13]. The literature illustrates the significant role AI-driven chatbots play in dermatology by integrating ResNet18-based image recognition with NLP-based text analysis. These studies collectively validate the feasibility of an AI-powered dermatological chatbot for real-time disease detection and patient guidance, forming the foundation of this research.

Recent advancements in AI-driven healthcare applications have demonstrated the efficacy of deep learning models in dermatological diagnosis. Edwards et al. explored ontology-based chatbot technology in medical diagnosis, emphasizing the significance of conversational AI in assisting healthcare professionals. Kawahara and Hamarneh examined the performance of ResNet18 based dermatological image classification, demonstrating accuracy comparable to human dermatologists. Sonntag et al. introduced an interactive deep learning system for skin lesion classification, reinforcing the potential of AI in assisting clinical decision-making. Sasseville et al. analyzed the role of chatbots in health promotion, identifying key limitations such as data privacy concerns and user trust issues. Several studies have also explored the integration of NLP-based symptom analysis to enhance AI-driven diagnostics, though limited research exists on the combination of ResNet18 based image classification with conversational AI. This study builds upon these existing frameworks by integrating deep learning with chatbot interfaces for a comprehensive dermatological assessment system.

III. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY



Figure(a) proposed method diagram

A. System Overview
The proposed AI-powered skin disease detection system integrates hybrid learning techniques by combining deep learning-based image classification and natural language processing (NLP)-driven symptom analysis. As depicted in the system architecture diagram, the chatbot processes user inputs through two primary pathways: image-based analysis and conversational symptom-based diagnosis. This multi-modal approach ensures improved diagnostic accuracy and contextual awareness.

B. Image-Based Diagnosis Using ResNet18
For image-based diagnosis, the system employs a ResNet-18. Users upload images of affected skin areas, which are preprocessed using resizing, normalization, and augmentation techniques such as flipping, rotation, and contrast enhancement. The model then classifies the images into predefined skin disease categories and generates a probabilistic diagnosis. The classification output is passed to the decision tree model for further refinement based on symptom-based data.

C. Symptom-Based Diagnosis Using NLP
The chatbot also allows users to describe their symptoms in natural language. Google Dialogflow is utilized for processing conversational inputs, extracting relevant symptom data through NLP techniques such as tokenization, stopword removal, and term frequency-inverse document frequency (TF-IDF) vectorization. A decision tree classifier, trained on a structured dataset of symptom-disease mappings, is used to generate a probable diagnosis based on the extracted features.

D. Hybrid Learning Approach for Decision Making
The decision tree model acts as a unifying component, combining outputs from both pathways to enhance diagnostic accuracy. If the ResNet-18 model provides a highly confident classification, the system prioritizes the image-based result. However, if the confidence score is low or inconclusive, the symptom-based analysis refines the final diagnosis. This hybrid approach leverages the complementary strengths of image processing and textual analysis, mitigating limitations inherent in standalone models.

E. Backend and Deployment
The backend is implemented using Flask, which serves as the communication bridge between the chatbot interface and AI models. The ResNet-18 model is stored in .pth format, while the decision tree model is serialized using .pkl for efficient retrieval. Google Cloud Storage is used to securely manage uploaded images. The API handles real-time communication between the chatbot interface and AI models, ensuring an interactive and accessible diagnostic process for users

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The evaluation of the proposed AI-powered skin disease detection system was conducted based on various performance metrics, including classification accuracy, precision, and recall. The results of the ResNet18 based image classification, decision tree-based symptom analysis, and the hybrid model are summarized in the table below

Model	Accuracy (%)	Precision (%)	Recall (%)
CNN (ResNet-18)	93.2	91.5	92.8
Decision Tree (NLP)	89.7	87.2	88.5
Hybrid Model (CNN + NLP)	94.1	93.4	94.0

Table 1: proposed hybrid model results

The ResNet-18 model demonstrated a high classification accuracy of 93.2% when trained on dermatological image datasets. The decision tree model, which processes text-based symptoms, achieved an accuracy of 89.7%. The hybrid learning approach, combining both ResNet18 based image recognition and NLP-driven symptom analysis, improved the overall system performance, achieving an accuracy of 94.1%.

A comparative analysis with human dermatologists showed an agreement rate of 86%, validating the reliability of the system. The precision and recall metrics further reinforce the model's robustness in handling diverse skin disease classifications. The hybrid model exhibited the best balance between accuracy, precision, and recall, making it the most effective approach for early disease detection. These results highlight the effectiveness of the system in assisting early disease detection and improving healthcare accessibility

A. Comparison with Existing Work

method	Accuracy(%)	Precision(%)	Recall(%)
VGG16	85.5	84.2	83.8
MobileNet	87.3	86.1	85.6
EfficientNet	90.2	89.5	88.9
ResNet18	91.8	90.9	90.5
Hybrid Method	94.5	93.8	94.1

Table 2 : Comparison with existing works

The table above presents a comparative analysis of different convolutional neural network (CNN) models used for skin disease classification, evaluating them based on accuracy, precision, and recall. VGG16, MobileNet, and EfficientNet are widely used architectures in medical image classification, each with its strengths and trade-offs. ResNet18, known for its residual connections, achieves higher accuracy than these baseline models. However, the Hybrid Method developed in this work outperforms all other models by achieving 94.5% accuracy, 93.8% precision, and 94.1% recall. This improvement demonstrates the effectiveness of combining multiple techniques, such as feature fusion or ensemble learning, in enhancing classification performance while maintaining generalization.

V. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

The proposed Hybrid Method for skin disease classification achieves 94.5% accuracy, 93.8% precision, and 94.1% recall, demonstrating its effectiveness in enhancing feature extraction, multi-scale learning, and training optimization. This approach improves classification robustness, reduces false predictions, and efficiently handles class imbalance. By leveraging advanced ResNet18 techniques, the model ensures better generalization and reliability in medical image analysis. Future research can focus on optimizing computational efficiency and applying this method to larger datasets for broader clinical applications.

A. Future Scope

Future work can focus on optimizing computational efficiency to make the model suitable for real-time applications on mobile and embedded devices. Enhancing feature extraction using attention mechanisms or transformers can further improve accuracy and interpretability. Expanding the dataset to include diverse skin conditions will strengthen generalization, while federated learning can enable secure, privacy-preserving training. Lastly, real-world clinical validation with dermatologists will be essential for practical deployment in healthcare.

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