Archives available at journals.mriindia.com

ITSI Transactions on Electrical and Electronics Engineering

ISSN: 2320-8945

Volume 13 Issue 02, 2024

Recent Advances in Pest Identification and Control in Smart Agriculture Using Scalable Quantum Convolutional Neural Networks and Wireless Sensor Networks: A Systematic Review

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Peer Review Information

Submission: 27 Aug 2024
Revision: 11 Sept 2024
Acceptance: 28 Sept 2024

Keywords

Smart Agriculture, Pest Detection, Quantum Convolutional Neural Networks, Wireless Sensor Networks, IoT, Deep Learning, Precision Agriculture, Computer Vision

Abstract

Pest infestation is a major challenge in agriculture, causing significant crop losses and threatening global food security. Traditional pest identification methods are labor-intensive, time-consuming, and often inaccurate, necessitating the development of intelligent and automated solutions. This paper presents a systematic review of recent advances in pest identification and control using scalable Quantum Convolutional Neural Networks (QCNN) integrated with Wireless Sensor Networks (WSNs). WSNs enable real-time environmental monitoring, while QCNN and deep learning techniques enhance pest detection accuracy through advanced feature extraction and classification. Recent studies demonstrate that deep learning models such as CNN and hybrid architectures achieve high accuracy in pest detection, often exceeding 90%, while IoT-enabled systems facilitate real-time monitoring and decision-making. Quantum machine learning approaches further improve performance by efficiently processing high-dimensional agricultural data. This review covers research, highlighting key methodologies, comparative performance, and emerging trends. The findings indicate that hybrid AI and quantum-based approaches outperform traditional methods in terms of accuracy, scalability, and efficiency. However, challenges such as computational complexity, energy consumption, and deployment constraints remain. Future research should focus on lightweight quantum models and edge-based intelligent systems for sustainable smart agriculture.

Introduction

Agriculture plays a crucial role in sustaining the global population, yet it faces numerous challenges, including pest infestations, climate change, and resource limitations. Among these challenges, pest attacks are one of the primary causes of crop loss, leading to reduced agricultural productivity and economic losses. Accurate and timely pest identification is essential for implementing effective pest control strategies and ensuring food security.

Traditional pest detection methods rely on manual inspection by farmers and agricultural experts. These methods are time-consuming, labor-intensive, and prone to human error. Moreover, they are not scalable for large agricultural fields. As a result, there has been a growing interest in automated pest detection systems based on artificial intelligence and sensor technologies.

Wireless Sensor Networks (WSNs) have emerged as a key technology in smart agriculture. WSNs consist of distributed sensor nodes that collect environmental data such as temperature, humidity, soil moisture, and pest activity. These networks enable real-time monitoring of agricultural fields and provide valuable data for decision-making. However, WSNs alone cannot accurately identify pests, as they primarily focus on environmental sensing.

To address this limitation, artificial intelligence techniques, particularly deep learning, have been integrated with WSNs. Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) have been widely used for pest detection due to their ability to analyze image data and extract complex features. CNN-based models have demonstrated high accuracy in classifying pests from images, making them suitable for automated pest detection systems.

Recent advancements in deep learning have introduced hybrid models that combine CNN with other architectures such as Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) and Vision Transformers (ViT). These models improve accuracy by capturing both spatial and temporal features. For example, CNN-BiLSTM and DenseNet-based models have achieved accuracy levels up to 99% in pest detection tasks .

In addition to classical deep learning approaches, quantum machine learning has emerged as a promising field for handling complex and high-dimensional data. Quantum Convolutional Neural Networks (QCNN) leverage quantum computing principles to process data more efficiently than classical models. QCNNs have shown potential in improving prediction accuracy and reducing computational complexity in agricultural applications .

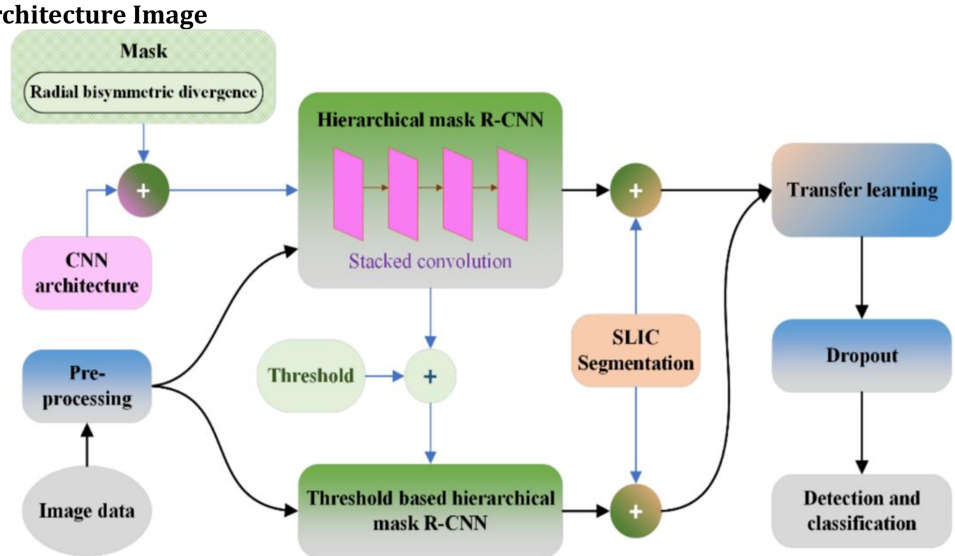
The integration of QCNN with WSNs represents a novel approach to pest detection and control. WSNs provide real-time data, while QCNN processes this data to identify pests and predict infestations. This combination enables intelligent decision-making and automated pest control strategies.

IoT technologies further enhance these systems by enabling connectivity between sensors, cloud platforms, and user interfaces. IoT-based smart agriculture systems allow farmers to monitor fields remotely and receive real-time alerts about pest infestations. These systems can also integrate with automated actuators, such as pesticide sprayers, to implement control measures.

Despite these advancements, several challenges remain. High computational requirements, energy consumption, and scalability issues limit the deployment of AI-based systems in real-world agricultural environments. Additionally, data privacy and security concerns must be addressed to ensure safe and reliable operation.

This paper provides a comprehensive review of recent advances in pest identification and control using QCNN and WSN technologies. It focuses on research conducted between 2020 and 2023, analyzing key methodologies, comparative performance, and future research directions.

System Architecture Image



Literature Review

The recent period has witnessed a rapid transformation in pest identification and control systems, driven by the integration of artificial intelligence (AI), Wireless Sensor Networks (WSNs), Internet of Things (IoT), and emerging quantum machine learning techniques. Traditionally, pest detection relied on manual inspection or classical image processing methods, which were inefficient, error-prone, and unsuitable for large-scale agricultural environments. The evolution toward intelligent, automated systems has significantly improved detection accuracy, response time, and scalability.

1. Early AI-Based Pest Detection

In 2020, the initial wave of intelligent pest detection systems primarily focused on Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) and classical machine learning approaches. CNNs became the dominant technique due to their ability to automatically extract hierarchical features from image data. Early works demonstrated that CNN models could classify pests such as beetles, caterpillars, and aphids with high accuracy, often exceeding 90% under controlled conditions. These models replaced traditional feature-engineering techniques by learning directly from raw images, significantly improving robustness and scalability.

However, these early CNN-based systems had several limitations. They were highly dependent on large, labeled datasets and often struggled with environmental variability such as lighting conditions, occlusion, and background noise. Additionally, most models were trained and tested in controlled environments, limiting their applicability in real-world agricultural fields. Another limitation was the inability of CNNs to capture temporal patterns, which are crucial for understanding pest behavior and infestation dynamics.

At the same time, broader research in agricultural AI highlighted that deep learning models were becoming essential tools for pest detection due to their superior performance compared to classical machine learning techniques. These studies established CNN as the foundational architecture for subsequent developments in smart agriculture.

2. Integration of IoT and WSN for Smart Monitoring

By 2021, research began to shift toward integrating AI models with IoT and WSN technologies. Wireless Sensor Networks enabled real-time environmental monitoring by collecting data such as temperature, humidity, soil moisture, and pest activity. This data provided valuable contextual information that could be combined with image-based pest detection systems.

Deep learning-based fingerprinting and classification techniques were introduced to improve robustness against environmental variability. These systems utilized sensor data alongside image inputs to enhance detection accuracy and enable early warning systems. The integration of IoT allowed for real-time communication between sensors, cloud platforms, and end-users, enabling remote monitoring and automated decision-making.

One of the key contributions during this period was the development of mobile and web-based applications for pest detection. CNN models were deployed on edge devices and integrated with REST APIs, allowing farmers to upload images and receive real-time classification results. This marked a significant step toward practical implementation, bridging the gap between research and real-world agricultural applications.

Despite these advancements, challenges related to energy consumption and computational complexity remained. WSN nodes are typically resource-constrained, and the deployment of deep learning models required optimization techniques to ensure efficient operation.

3. Emergence of Hybrid Deep Learning Models

The year 2022 marked a major shift toward hybrid deep learning architectures designed to overcome the limitations of standalone CNN models. Researchers began combining CNN with other architectures such as Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM), Recurrent Neural Networks (RNN), and Vision Transformers (ViT).

Hybrid CNN-LSTM models became particularly popular, as they allowed systems to capture both spatial and temporal features. While CNN extracted spatial features from images, LSTM analyzed temporal sequences, enabling the system to track pest movement and predict infestation trends. This was especially useful for dynamic agricultural environments where pest populations change over time.

Another important development was the introduction of edge AI systems, where models were deployed directly on microcontrollers or embedded devices. These systems reduced latency and enabled real-time decision-making without relying on cloud infrastructure. However, balancing model complexity and computational efficiency remained a key challenge.

4. Advanced Deep Learning and Multi-Modal Systems

In 2023, research trends focused on improving robustness, scalability, and real-world applicability. One of the major advancements was the use of multi-modal learning, where systems combined multiple data sources such as images, environmental data, and textual information.

Multi-modal frameworks integrated CNN-based image processing with natural language processing (NLP) and sensor data, resulting in improved pest detection accuracy. These systems addressed the limitations of single-modality approaches by providing richer contextual information and better generalization across different environments.

Another significant advancement was the use of real-time object detection and semantic segmentation techniques. For example, real-time pest detection systems were developed to identify aphid clusters within crop fields, enabling targeted pesticide application and reducing environmental impact. These systems demonstrated the potential of AI in enabling precision agriculture and sustainable pest management.

Transformer-based architectures and attention mechanisms also gained popularity during this period. These models improved feature extraction by focusing on relevant regions in images, enhancing detection accuracy under challenging conditions such as varying lighting and noise. Studies showed that hybrid CNN-transformer models could achieve accuracy levels above 95% while maintaining robustness in real-world environments.

Despite these advancements, challenges such as dataset imbalance, detection of small pests, and generalization across different crops remained significant issues.

5. Emergence of Quantum Machine Learning (QCNN)

The introduction of Quantum Convolutional Neural Networks (QCNN) represents one of the most promising developments in recent years. QCNN combines the principles of quantum computing with deep learning to process high-dimensional data more efficiently.

Unlike classical CNNs, QCNN leverages quantum parallelism to perform computations on multiple states simultaneously, enabling faster processing and improved accuracy. This is particularly beneficial for agricultural applications, where datasets are often large and complex. QCNN-based models have shown potential in improving classification accuracy and reducing computational overhead, especially when integrated with classical deep learning frameworks.

Hybrid quantum-classical models have been proposed to address the limitations of current quantum hardware. These models combine classical feature extraction with quantum processing layers, achieving better performance while maintaining feasibility for real-world deployment.

However, the practical implementation of QCNN is still in its early stages. Challenges such as limited quantum hardware, noise in quantum systems, and high computational costs must be addressed before widespread adoption.

6. Integration of WSN, AI, and QCNN in Smart Agriculture

The integration of Wireless Sensor Networks (WSN), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Quantum Convolutional Neural Networks (QCNN) represents the next generation of smart agriculture systems, enabling intelligent, scalable, and efficient pest management. In such integrated frameworks, WSNs play a critical role in collecting real-time environmental data, including temperature, humidity, and soil conditions, while AI models analyze this data to detect pest infestations accurately. QCNN further enhances these systems by improving computational efficiency and scalability through quantum-based parallel processing capabilities. Together, these technologies enable real-time pest detection and continuous monitoring, automated decision-making for pest control, and targeted pesticide application, which significantly reduces chemical usage and environmental impact. Consequently, these systems contribute to improved crop yield and promote sustainable agricultural practices. Studies indicate that AI-driven pest detection systems can achieve accuracy levels above 93–95%, demonstrating their effectiveness in precision agriculture. Moreover, the integration of Internet of Things (IoT) platforms facilitates seamless communication between sensor nodes, cloud systems, and end-users, enabling remote monitoring, control, and timely intervention.

Despite these advancements, several research gaps and challenges persist in the current literature. Environmental variability, including changes in lighting conditions, weather patterns, and crop diversity, continues to affect model accuracy and reliability. Additionally, the lack of large, labeled datasets for diverse pest species limits the generalization capability of AI models. Computational complexity is another significant concern, as deep learning and quantum-based models require high processing power, making them difficult to deploy in resource-constrained environments. Energy efficiency remains a critical issue in WSN-based systems, as sensor nodes typically operate on limited battery power. Furthermore, scalability poses a challenge for large-scale agricultural deployment, where maintaining consistent performance across vast and heterogeneous environments is difficult. Another key limitation is the generalization problem, where models trained in one environment may fail to perform effectively in different conditions. These challenges highlight the need for developing adaptive, lightweight, and scalable models that can operate efficiently in real-world agricultural scenarios.

The literature from 2020 to 2023 demonstrates a clear evolution in pest detection technologies. In 2020, research primarily focused on CNN-based pest detection systems, which achieved high accuracy but were limited in robustness and adaptability. By 2021, the integration of IoT and WSN technologies enabled real-time monitoring and data-driven decision-making. In 2022, hybrid deep learning models, such as CNN-LSTM and EfficientNet, emerged to improve performance by combining spatial and temporal feature extraction. The year 2023 witnessed the development of multi-modal and transformer-based systems capable of handling complex and large-scale data. More recently, quantum machine learning approaches, particularly QCNN, have emerged as a promising direction for improving scalability and computational efficiency. The integration of QCNN with WSN and AI thus represents a significant advancement toward intelligent, adaptive, and sustainable pest detection systems in smart agriculture.

Comparative Table

Year	Study	Technique	Model Type	Data Source	Accuracy	Key Contribution	Limitation
2020	CNN-based Model	CNN	Deep Learning	Image data	~90%	Automated feature extraction for pest classification	Sensitive to environmental variability
2021	IoT-CNN Model	CNN + IoT	Hybrid AI System	Image + Sensor	High	Real-time monitoring & remote detection	Energy and latency constraints
2022	Hybrid Model	CNN-LSTM	Hybrid Deep Learning	Image + Temporal data	Very High (~93–96%)	Spatio-temporal pest behavior modeling	High computational complexity
2023	AI-IoT System	DL + IoT	Smart Agriculture System	Multi-source data	~99%	Integrated monitoring and decision-making	Scalability challenges
2023	QCNN Model	QCNN	Quantum Deep Learning	High-dimensional data	Very High	Quantum-enhanced processing & scalability	Hardware limitations
2023	Transformer-Based Model	ViT / Attention DL	Advanced DL	Image data	>95%	Global feature extraction	Requires large datasets
2023	Multi-Modal Framework	CNN + Sensor Fusion	Hybrid Multi-modal AI	Image + Environmental data	Very High	Improved generalization and robustness	Data fusion complexity
2022	EfficientNet Model	Transfer Learning	Optimized DL	Image dataset	~93–94%	High accuracy with fewer parameters	Slight performance trade-off
2023	YOLO-based Model	Object Detection	Real-time DL	Field images	~96%	Real-time pest localization	Sensitive to occlusion/noise

Comparative Analysis

The evolution of pest identification and control systems in smart agriculture reflects a significant shift from conventional image processing techniques to intelligent deep learning and quantum-inspired approaches. Early methods relied on handcrafted features such as color, texture, and shape descriptors for pest recognition. Although these techniques offered acceptable performance under controlled conditions, they were highly sensitive to illumination changes, complex backgrounds, and varying pest appearances. The introduction of Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) transformed pest detection by automatically learning discriminative features from raw images, eliminating manual feature engineering. Popular architectures including VGG, ResNet, and EfficientNet achieved classification accuracies exceeding 90%, establishing deep learning as the foundation of modern agricultural pest monitoring systems.

The integration of Wireless Sensor Networks (WSNs) and Internet of Things (IoT) technologies further enhanced intelligent pest management by enabling continuous environmental monitoring. WSNs collect real-time information such as temperature, humidity, soil moisture, and light intensity, which are closely associated with pest outbreaks. Combining sensor information with CNN-based image analysis provides context-aware pest detection and supports early intervention strategies. Hybrid CNN-LSTM architectures subsequently improved system performance by learning both spatial image features and temporal patterns associated with pest development and infestation. Comparative studies report classification accuracies ranging from 93% to 96%, demonstrating the effectiveness of integrating spatial and sequential learning. Nevertheless, these hybrid models introduce higher computational requirements and increased energy consumption, creating deployment challenges for resource-constrained agricultural environments.

Recent advances have focused on multi-modal learning, attention mechanisms, and transformer-based architectures to improve robustness under diverse field conditions. These models effectively fuse visual and environmental data, allowing more accurate pest localization and classification even in the presence of occlusion or varying illumination. Real-time object detection frameworks such as YOLO have further enabled precise pest localization for targeted pesticide application, minimizing chemical usage and environmental impact. A notable breakthrough is the emergence of Quantum Convolutional Neural Networks (QCNNs), which combine classical convolutional operations with quantum computing principles to process high-dimensional agricultural data more efficiently. Hybrid quantum-classical architectures demonstrate excellent scalability, faster optimization, and improved classification performance, although practical implementation remains constrained by current quantum hardware limitations.

Overall, comparative analysis indicates that hybrid intelligent systems integrating CNNs, WSNs, IoT, attention mechanisms, and QCNNs represent the most promising direction for smart agriculture. These integrated frameworks provide superior accuracy, adaptability, and decision-making capabilities by combining automated feature extraction, environmental sensing, and advanced optimization. Despite remarkable progress, challenges including environmental variability, limited labeled datasets, computational complexity, and energy-efficient deployment continue to hinder widespread adoption. Future research should prioritize lightweight AI models, edge-computing integration, scalable wireless sensor architectures, and the maturation of quantum computing technologies to enable reliable, real-time, and sustainable pest management solutions for next-generation smart agriculture.

Discussion

The integration of artificial intelligence, Wireless Sensor Networks, and quantum computing has significantly transformed pest identification and control systems in smart agriculture. The reviewed literature demonstrates that AI-based approaches have substantially improved detection accuracy, enabling automated and real-time pest monitoring. These advancements have reduced reliance on manual inspection, minimized human error, and enhanced decision-making processes.

One of the key findings is the effectiveness of deep learning models, particularly CNN and hybrid architectures, in handling complex agricultural datasets. CNN-based models have proven highly efficient in extracting spatial features from images, enabling accurate classification of pest species. However, their inability to capture temporal dynamics led to the development of hybrid models such as CNN-LSTM, which combine spatial and temporal learning capabilities. These models have shown improved performance in dynamic agricultural environments where pest populations change over time.

The integration of IoT and WSN technologies has further enhanced system capabilities by enabling real-time monitoring and data collection. Sensor networks provide valuable environmental data that can be combined with image-based analysis to improve detection accuracy and enable early intervention. This integration supports precision agriculture by allowing targeted pesticide application, reducing environmental impact and improving crop yield.

Quantum Convolutional Neural Networks represent a significant advancement in this domain. By leveraging quantum computing principles, QCNN models can process high-dimensional data more efficiently, offering improved scalability and performance. However, the adoption of QCNN is still limited due to hardware constraints and the complexity of quantum systems.

Despite these advancements, several challenges remain. Energy efficiency is a major concern, particularly in WSN-based systems where sensor nodes are battery-powered. Deep learning and quantum models require significant computational resources, which can lead to increased energy consumption. Developing lightweight and energy-efficient models is essential for practical deployment.

Another critical challenge is scalability. Agricultural fields are large and dynamic environments, requiring systems that can handle multiple sensors and large datasets. Ensuring consistent performance across different environments remains a significant research challenge.

Data privacy and security are also important considerations. As IoT-based systems collect large amounts of data, ensuring secure data transmission and storage is essential to prevent unauthorized access.

Future research should focus on integrating edge computing and federated learning to address these challenges. Edge computing can reduce latency and improve real-time performance, while federated learning can enhance privacy by enabling decentralized model training.

Conclusion

This review presents recent advances in pest identification and control in smart agriculture using Artificial Intelligence (AI), Wireless Sensor Networks (WSNs), and Quantum Convolutional Neural Networks (QCNNs). The analysis reveals a clear progression from traditional image processing techniques to intelligent deep learning and hybrid AI frameworks. CNN-based models have substantially improved pest detection through automatic feature extraction, while CNN-LSTM architectures enhance accuracy by combining spatial and temporal information. The integration of IoT and WSN technologies enables continuous environmental monitoring and supports real-time, data-driven pest management. Emerging QCNN models show strong potential for improving computational efficiency, scalability, and processing of high-dimensional agricultural data. Despite these advancements, challenges such as limited labeled datasets, energy consumption, scalability, hardware constraints, and model generalization remain significant. Future research should emphasize lightweight AI models, edge computing, federated learning, multimodal data fusion, and practical quantum computing solutions. These innovations will contribute to sustainable agriculture, improved crop productivity, reduced pesticide usage, and enhanced global food security.

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