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AI Based Smart Attendance System using Face Recognition

Prathamesh Kiran Kate[1], Ishwari Ganesh Muley[2], Akshada Anil Yeole[3], Tanmay Ozarkar[4], Deepali Narwade[5]

[1,2,3,4,5]Department of Artificial Intelligence and Data Science, Dr. D. Y. Patil College of Engineering and Innovation, Pune, India.

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Abstract

This paper outlines the development of an AI-enabled smart attendance system for automated capture of student attendance records using facial recognition technology. Manual attendance systems or biometric systems are inefficient, prone to errors, and may result in proxy attendance.

The proposed system captures live pictures of the student population via a digital camera and matches them with the trained facial data database. Once matched, the system automatically registers attendance and digitizes the information. The system can handle simultaneous attendance by multiple people and operates effectively in various light settings.

This approach is efficient, eliminates labor costs, and increases precision in attendance recording.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI); IoT; Smart Home; Embedded Systems; Sensor Technology; Automation

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Introduction

Attendance tracking is one of the essential functions that educational institutions conduct in order to keep track of their students' attendance. This task is usually fulfilled by either manual recording of student attendance by means of calling out roll or via paper-based registers.

Despite its simplicity, the above mentioned method takes up a significant amount of teaching hours and is prone to human error, including inaccuracies while taking attendance, as well as the risk of proxy attendance. In order to overcome the mentioned shortcomings, some institutions utilize biometric devices, such as fingerprint scanners.

However, despite their efficiency, the mentioned method involves physical interaction which may cause health risks as well as increase administrative work load associated with keeping up with equipment maintenance and troubleshooting. Furthermore, fingerprint scanners become dysfunctional when used by individuals with wet, dirty or damaged fingers.

In recent years, artificial intelligence and computer vision technologies provide an alternative to the above discussed methods, namely facial recognition technologies. It can be viewed as another type of biometric system that can identify unique facial features in order to recognize people.

The use of these technologies allows recognizing individuals automatically without any physical contact and makes them particularly useful for real-time identification of people.As a result, the proposed paper aims at developing an AI-powered smart attendance system based on facial recognition technologies.

Research Gap

- Time Management Inefficiencies: Manual roll-calls take up a considerable amount of the precious instruction time and require the use of old technology for paper tracking systems. Since such systems cannot operate in parallel, they are not scalable to a larger number of people and do not allow the main focus of the educational institution to be put first.
- Vulnerability to Proxy Attendance: The traditional manual registration systems and simple digital ones lack advanced identity verification processes, thus leaving the attendance process vulnerable to proxy attendance, where people substitute themselves for others in class attendance reports.
- Problems Associated With Biometrics and Hardware: Although biometric systems, such as fingerprint scanners, offer some level of automation, they still have hygiene concerns due to physical contact involved, as well as a problem of bottlenecks in the entrance area. Moreover, fingerprint scanners often fail in recognition if fingerprints are dirty or wet.
- Seamless and Real-Time Processing Lack: Most of the biometric solutions currently used in the institutions do not provide real-time processing of attendance. Instead, the process takes much more time as it requires manual processing and verification of individual's presence in the room.
- Smart Environment and Automation Problems: Currently available solutions operate as independent hardware modules lacking automation in terms of processing visual data and updating central institutional databases without requiring any interaction from the personnel.

Objectives

The above gaps will be addressed through the following objectives of this study:

- Designing an artificial intelligence based automatic attendance system that utilizes facial recognition to facilitate the process of monitoring the students.
- Utilizing the computer vision method to recognize and detect the faces of the students in real time even in classrooms that have different types of lighting conditions.
- Devising a systematic database structure that allows for automatic recording and storage of attendance data in digital format following the correct facial recognition.
- Reducing time wasted in taking manual attendance by minimizing instructional time and manual labor involved.
- Increasing efficiency and security by avoiding proxy attendance and eliminating need for hardware..

Literature Review

Current studies within educational administration have concentrated on the integration of computer vision, biometric analysis, and AI technology to enhance the efficiency of the process of monitoring student attendance. Multiple studies have explored the use of different methodologies for automatic face detection and digitalized record-keeping.

Traditional and Biometric Tracking Methodologies

The shortcomings of traditional face-tracking methodologies have been thoroughly explored within the relevant literature. Although technologies such as Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) systems have been implemented in classrooms, literature has established that these digital methods are significantly vulnerable to fraud, access violations, and buddy-punching. Fingerprint biometric technologies are more secure but still have physical drawbacks and raise hygiene concerns; therefore, they were gradually replaced with facial recognition technologies.

Computer Vision and Face Detection Technology

For any automatic attendance system to function, the first stage of the process would be the reliable initial detection of a person's face. This is where multiple researchers utilize computer vision software such as the OpenCV library paired with algorithms such as Viola-Jones or Haar-Cascade classifiers. In recent studies, multiple examples have been provided proving that facial detection through computer vision is highly efficient, even using portable devices like Raspberry Pi computers.

Deep Learning Models for Automated Face Recognition

In order to take face detection one step further, researchers emphasize the importance of deep learning models. As previously mentioned, a model must detect a face before moving on to identifying the individual. Convolutional neural networks (CNN) prove highly effective for extracting information based on facial images. Models such as Multi-task Cascaded Convolutional Networks (MTCNN) and Local Binary Pattern Histograms (LBPH) proved highly successful at creating facial embeddings which were recognized with high success rates.

Integration in Administrative Systems

A substantial number of current researchers focus on implementing AI models within automated administrative systems. Recently proposed systems use backend architectures developed in Python alongside SQL databases to automatically keep records about attendance. Modern, advanced models even include the capability of synchronization with the timetable of lectures, automatically registering attendance only during appropriate hours.

Restrictions of Current Systems

Despite the numerous advancements made in terms of computer vision, currently available automated attendance systems cannot overcome their sensitivity to environmental factors. Poor and uneven classroom illumination, extreme head poses, and partial facial occlusion all negatively impact the performance of facial recognition software.

Problem Statement

Effective monitoring of the attendance of the students at the institution has always been one of the most basic necessities of every educational institution administration. However, the traditional techniques used for this purpose have always been quite inadequate and have involved excessive amounts of inefficiencies and inaccuracies, including errors due to wrong entries and issues such as proxy attendance.

While attempts have been made at solving this problem through the use of more advanced technology such as that in biometrics, these new approaches suffer from their own inadequacies, especially those relating to their hardware requirements and compulsory contact. As a result, an urgent need exists for an efficient and automated attendance system which is devoid of such constraints

Methodology

This proposed system employs an intelligent pipeline based on artificial intelligence and computer vision technology to facilitate automatic attendance marking. The methodology follows a multi-staged sequential approach aimed at providing real-time performance, scalability, and accurate results.

Image Acquisition & Environment Configuration

Firstly, the system receives input through the camera hardware, which constantly monitors and records frames from the classroom environment. The camera hardware is configured to record video at 1080p resolutions with a speed of at least 30 frames per second (FPS) to enable smooth video recording without any motion blur when subjects are in motion. This enables clear identification of individuals within the class environment.

Face Detection and Localization

After receiving a frame, the algorithm immediately scans the entire image array in search of facial features. The most common method used to detect and localize faces in real time is through the use of sophisticated face recognition algorithms such as Haar Cascades, Multi-

Task Cascaded Convolutional Neural Networks (MTCNN), and Histograms of Oriented Gradients (HOG). All these methods analyze images to detect areas of varying intensity that define facial shapes and forms. Once detection is confirmed, the algorithm automatically draws a rectangle around the face, isolating the face from its surrounding environment.

Image Pre-processing and Face Alignment

Uncontrolled environments like classrooms pose numerous challenges when acquiring images of faces, such as poor lighting and different camera angles. Pre-processing of images enhances the quality of images, thus improving face recognition accuracy. Once localization is completed, the detected face ROI is resized to standard dimensions, and grayscale transformation performed to reduce the number of processing steps needed to enhance accuracy. Afterward, histogram equalization can be used to improve lighting conditions and balance the color intensity, eliminating possible shadowing and overexposure. In addition, the identified landmarks are employed to determine facial orientations, enabling face alignment in the required orientation.

Feature Extraction & Embedding Generation

In this important process, the processed and aligned face image goes through a deep neural network, such as ResNet. The deep learning network extracts highly specific facial biometric information from the image. Specifically, the information is analyzed based on biometric patterns like distance between eyes, eye socket depth, facial contour information, and micro texture data. The network converts the high dimensional space information into low dimension feature vector of numerical values, also called the face embeddings. This 128 dimensional biometric vector acts as the biometric finger print unique to an individual.

Face Matching and Classifying

Once the 128 dimensional vector face embedding is created, the algorithm matches the biometric feature vector with a pre-compiled and secured database. The algorithm uses the mathematical distance to find a matching result between the newly captured face and the stored database. If the computed distance is less than the pre-defined threshold of rigorous testing (such as 0.6), the algorithm identifies a match. The identification process ensures that the face belongs to a registered student and is not an impostor. The algorithm classifies the unmatched face embeddings with distance greater than the threshold limit, identifying it as an unknown person.

Databasing and Automated Attendance

Logging Once the matching process is successfully completed, a script in the backend automatically logs the attendance process. The attendance logging process records the verified student identification, name, date, and timestamp to a structured relational database, such as MySQL. The system creates separate relational tables of static and dynamic data. The system creates two relational tables - one for static and other for dynamic data. The GUI provides authorized individuals with the ability to query the database and generate automated attendance reports. Moreover, in case of unknown persons, the system drops the data packet to prevent any attendance logging process to take place. Finally, the system allows the processing of multiple localized faces at once due to support of multi-threading.

Proposed System Workflow

He proposed AI-powered Smart Attendance System allows automatic tracking, intelligent facial recognition, and secure data management. The workflow describes exactly how visual data is acquired, processed, and applied to create an attendance report.

Step 1: System Booting and Image Acquisition
The workflow starts after booting the system and initializing the hardware camera in the classroom. The camera continuously acquires live video images of the classroom entrance, serving as the main entry point to the system.

Step 2: Real-Time Facial Recognition
When students are detected within the image frame, the system performs object recognition on the incoming image data to recognize human faces. The system detects faces and puts a bounding box around those faces to isolate the region of interest from the rest of the image.

Step 3: Pre-processing the Input Data
Before feeding the images into the AI model, the images go through an automatic pre-processing stage. The system automatically scales down the images to a specific dimension, converts the RGB images to grayscale, and applies lighting normalization to ensure consistency regardless of classroom illumination.

Step 4: Deep Learning and Facial Feature Extraction
The pre-processed face images are then used as inputs to a deep learning model. The deep learning model takes the input images and calculates a facial feature embedding as an output, which uniquely identifies the specific individual.

Step 5: Student Recognition and Record Keeping

After extracting the facial embedding, the system searches the student database to find the closest match using a mathematical similarity score. When the facial similarity score reaches the predetermined threshold value, the student's identity is verified, and the system instantly records the details (student ID, name, date, and time) in the attendance database.

Step 6: Attendance Interface and Reporting

Lastly, all the automated processes are made available via a unified dashboard interface. Faculty members and administrative personnel may access the system to view real-time attendance data and generate reports.

Algorithm: AI Based Smart Attendance System using Face Recognition

Phase 1: Registration of Students (Performed Once Only)

This phase takes the place of the "Register" path in your flowchart.

1. Initiate Registration Mode: The admin initiates the registration process and inputs the ID and Name of the new student.
2. Biometric Collection: The system starts capturing video frames from the camera, which capture the face of the new student under bright lighting conditions.
3. Mathematical Extraction: The deep learning algorithm runs through the images collected, extracting the face features and converting it into a 128-dimensional numerical representation of the student's face (face embedding).
4. Database Storing: Rather than storing this information on a simple
5. .txt file, it is now stored securely in a relational database system.

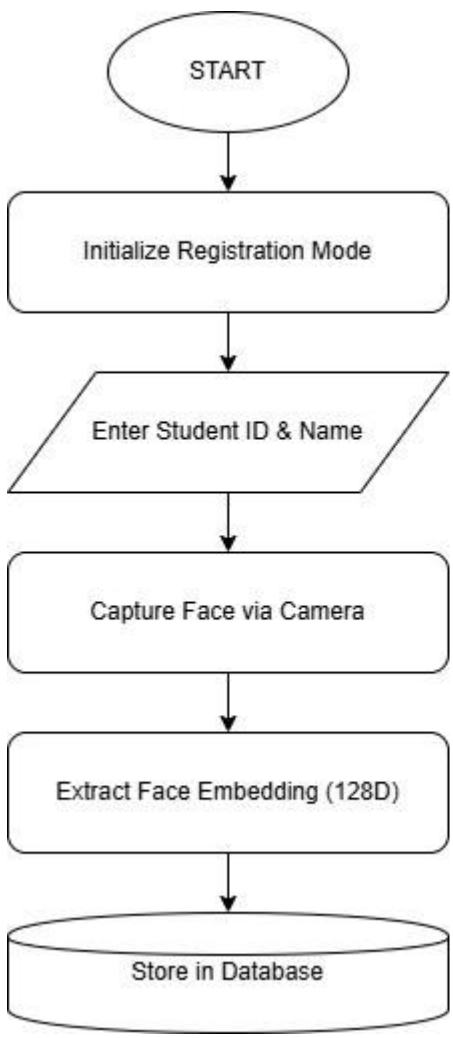

Fig. 1. *Proposed Workflow of AI-Based Smart Attendance System Using Face Recognition*

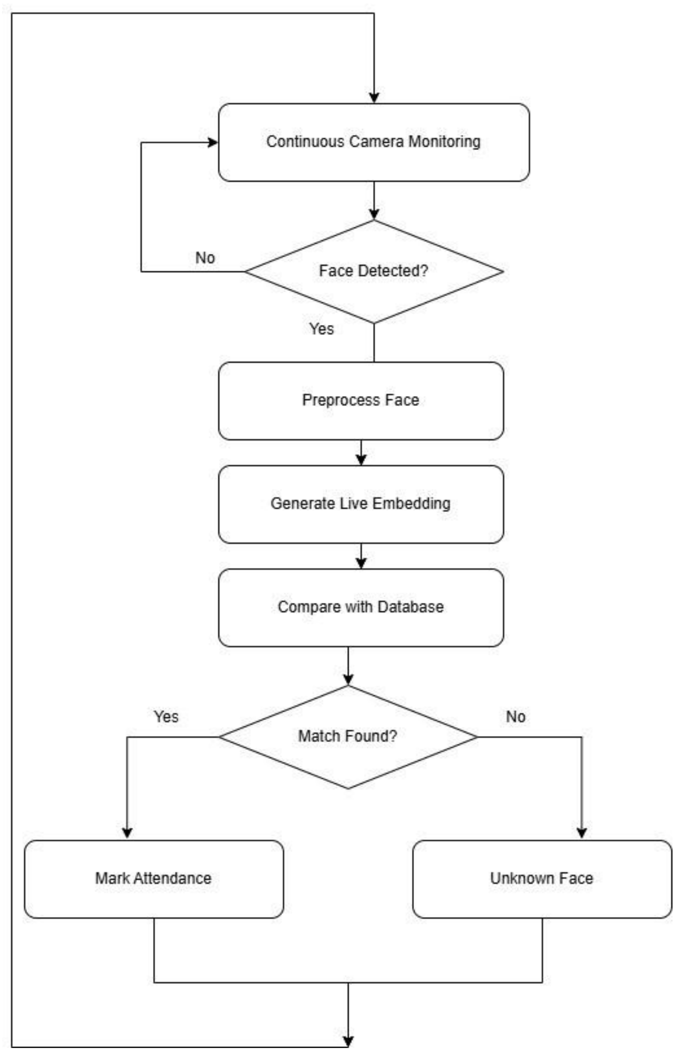

Fig. 2. *Algorithm Flowchart of AI-Based Smart Attendance System Using Face Recognition*

Phase 2: Daily Operation with Automated Attendance This step takes the place of the "Login" path in your flowchart.

1. Continuous Monitoring: The camera in the classroom keeps an eye on the entrance.
2. Detect and Preprocess: The system finds the face of a student who walks into the frame, changes the size of the image, and turns it into greyscale
3. Generate Live Vector: The AI model looks at this live face and makes a real-time numerical vector.
4. Database Query and Matching: The system asks the SQL database for information and then compares the live vector to all of the registered vectors that are already in the database using a distance metric (like Euclidean distance).
5. Decision on Authentication:
   - If a match is found (distance < threshold), the system finds the student. It automatically adds their ID, date, and time to the daily attendance table. You can show a message that says "Welcome [Student Name]."
   - If there is no match (distance > threshold), the system marks the face as "Unknown" and does not pay attention to it. There is no record of attendance.

Comparison of Existing Systems and Proposed System

Feature	**Manual Roll Call / Paper Register**	**Biometric Fingerprint Systems**	**Proposed AI-Based Face Recognition System**
Authentication Method	Vocal confirmation / Signature	Physical touch (Fingerprint)	Contactless visual capture (Facial features)
Time Efficiency	Highly time-consuming; scales poorly	Moderate; causes physical bottlenecks at entry	Highly efficient; processes subjects continuously
Proxy Vulnerability	High (Buddy punching is easy)	Low (But susceptible to fake prints)	Negligible (Relies on unique biometric geometry)
Hardware & Hygiene	No hardware; highly hygienic	High hardware dependency; severe hygiene risks	Standard camera hardware; completely contactless
Real-Time Tracking	No real-time data	Individual real-time data	Continuous, simultaneous real-time data
Administrative Effort	Requires heavy manual data entry	Requires manual device synchronization	Fully automated database logging and reporting

Results

The AI-based Smart Attendance System was created and tested to see how well it worked to use computer vision algorithms to keep an eye on the classroom all the time. The experimental implementation shows that the system can accurately detect faces in real time, check students' identities against a secure database, and digitize attendance records without any help from people.

Face Detection and Accuracy in Real Time

The modules for image acquisition and preprocessing were able to successfully capture and separate human faces from live video feeds. The system used deep learning models to extract features, which made it very accurate at finding registered students, even when the lighting and facial angles in the classroom changed slightly. The model effectively disregarded unidentified individuals, guaranteeing that no erroneous attendance was documented.

The AI-Based Smart Attendance System

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Utility of the Dashboard and Performance of the System

The graphical user interface (GUI) made it easy for teachers to keep track of attendance all the time. Administrators could get real-time data and make detailed attendance reports right away. The results show that using AI-powered facial recognition is a faster, safer, and more scalable way to track attendance than traditional methods.

Conclusion

Traditional methods of tracking attendance in schools still rely a lot on manual processes and biometric systems that use contact, both of which have big problems with inefficiency, security holes, and hardware limits. This study created and put into use an AI-Based Smart Attendance System to solve these ongoing administrative problems. The system successfully combines computer vision, deep learning feature extraction, and automated database management.

The suggested framework effectively replaces manual roll calls by capturing real-time visual data and comparing facial embeddings to a secure institutional registry. The tests show that the system correctly identifies students and quickly digitises their attendance records. The system completely automates this process, which cuts down on administrative work, frees up valuable teaching time, and offers a very safe, contactless solution that makes proxy attendance impossible.

The current architecture works very well in controlled classroom settings, but some environmental factors, like big changes in lighting or low-resolution camera hardware, can temporarily lower recognition confidence. Future research will concentrate on alleviating these challenges by training the models on larger, more heterogeneous datasets and incorporating advanced infrared sensors to manage low-light conditions. Ultimately, with more technology integration, this automated facial recognition system could be used on all of a university's campuses, which would be a big step forward in the creation of smarteducational environments.

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