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Students Face Recognition Using YOLOv8 College of Technology and Science Alzwayia

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A B S T R A C T
Abstract: In colleges and universities, accurate student identification and attendance tracking are essential for effective campus management and student engagement. Traditional manual methods, like signing in sheets and ID card swipes, can be time-consuming, prone to human error, and lack scalability. The aim of this research is to explore the possibility of utilizing computer vision and deep learning techniques, particularly the YOLO8 object detection model, to automate the student identification process at the College of Science and Technology. The study involved obtaining a wide range of student facial images, taken through security cameras and supervised photo shoots on the College of Science and Technology campus. The YOLO8 model was then trained and validated on this dataset, demonstrating its ability to accurately detect and recognize students' faces in various scenarios, such as classroom settings, campus events, and crowded areas. The model achieved an impressive overall identification accuracy of 94.7%, outperforming traditional face recognition approaches. The results of this study highlight the potential of YOLO8-based face recognition systems in enhancing college operations, including automated attendance tracking, improved campus security, and personalized student services. The implementation of such a system can significantly streamline administrative tasks, provide real-time data for data-driven decision-making, and enhance the overall student experience on campus. This research paves the way for the wider adoption of computer vision technologies in the education sector, inspiring similar initiatives at other academic institutions.

Keywords: Student Face Recognition, YOLO8, Computer Vision, Deep Learning

التعرف على وجوه الطلاب باستخدام YOLOv8: كلية التقنية والعلوم – الزاوية

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الملخص
في الكليات والجامعات، يُعد التعرف الدقيق على الطلاب وتسجيل الحضور أمرًا ضروريًا لإدارة الحرم الجامعي بفعالية وتعزيز تفاعل الطلاب. غالبًا ما تكون الأساليب التقليدية اليدوية، مثل التوقيع على أوراق الحضور أو استخدام بطاقات الهوية، غير فعالة، حيث تستغرق وقتًا طويلاً، وتكون عرضة للأخطاء البشرية، كما أنها تفتقر إلى القدرة على التوسع. يهدف هذا البحث إلى استكشاف إمكانية استخدام رؤية الحاسوب وتقنيات التعلم العميق، وتحديدًا نموذج اكتشاف الكائناتYOLO8 ، لأتمتة عملية التعرف على الطلاب في كلية العلوم والتكنولوجيا .تضمنت الدراسة جمع مجموعة واسعة من صور وجوه الطلاب، التي تم التقاطها عبر كاميرات المراقبة وجلسات تصوير خاضعة للإشراف داخل حرم الكلية. بعد ذلك، تم تدريب نموذج YOLO8 والتحقق من دقته باستخدام هذه البيانات، حيث أظهر قدرة عالية على التعرف على وجوه الطلاب بدقة في مختلف السيناريوهات، مثل الفصول الدراسية، والفعاليات الجامعية، والمناطق المزدحمة. حقق النموذج دقة تعريف إجمالية بلغت 94.7%، متفوقًا على طرق التعرف التقليدية على الوجوه. تسلط نتائج هذه الدراسة الضوء على الإمكانيات الكبيرة لاستخدام أنظمة التعرف على الوجوه المستندة إلى YOLO8 في تحسين عمليات الكلية، بما في ذلك تتبع الحضور تلقائيًا، وتعزيز الأمن داخل الحرم الجامعي، وتقديم خدمات مخصصة للطلاب. يمكن أن يُسهم تطبيق مثل هذا النظام بشكل كبير في تبسيط المهام الإدارية، وتوفير بيانات فورية لاتخاذ قرارات مبنية على البيانات، وتحسين تجربة الطلاب داخل الحرم الجامعي .
كما يمهد هذا البحث الطريق نحو اعتماد أوسع لتقنيات رؤية الحاسوب في قطاع التعليم، مما قد يلهم مبادرات مماثلة في مؤسسات أكاديمية أخرى.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعرف على وجوه الطلاب، YOLO8، الرؤية الحاسوبية، التعلم العميق

Introduction

Accurate identification of students and reliable attendance tracking are essential elements of effective campus management in higher education institutions. Traditionally, colleges and universities have depended on manual methods such as sign-in sheets, ID card swipes, and headcounts to monitor student attendance and engagement. However, these approaches are often time-consuming, susceptible to human error, and lack the scalability needed to efficiently manage large student bodies.

The advancement of computer vision and deep learning offers a compelling solution to these limitations. In particular, object detection models like YOLO (You Only Look Once) have shown exceptional accuracy in identifying and classifying multiple objects within images, including human faces. By leveraging such technologies, educational institutions can automate student identification processes, resulting in faster, more reliable attendance tracking, enhanced campus security, and improved data-driven decision-making.

Although previous research has explored facial recognition techniques for attendance systems—using methods such as Viola-Jones, Eigenfaces, and convolutional neural networks (CNNs)—many have encountered difficulties related to varying environmental conditions, limited scalability, and real-time performance constraints [1, 2, 3].

This study addresses these challenges by implementing the state-of-the-art YOLOv8 model for student face recognition in a real-world academic setting. Unlike prior work, this research delivers a complete end-to-end system encompassing data collection, model training, real-time implementation, and integration with student information systems—providing a practical and scalable solution.

Moreover, the study evaluates different YOLOv8 variants to strike a balance between accuracy and computational efficiency—an aspect that is often overlooked in similar educational applications.

The primary objective of this research is to evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of the YOLOv8 model in accurately detecting and recognizing student faces within the College of Science and Technology campus. A diverse dataset of student facial images has been compiled, serving as the foundation for model training and validation. By achieving these goals, this study contributes to the expanding body of research on the application of computer vision and deep learning in education, paving the way for smarter and more efficient campus management solutions.

Related Work

Several studies have explored the use of computer vision and machine learning techniques for student face recognition and attendance tracking in academic settings. Existing approaches have utilized various algorithms, such as Viola-Jones face detection [1], Eigenfaces [2], Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) [3], and, more recently, deep learning-based object detection models.

The Viola-Jones face detection algorithm, introduced by Viola and Jones in 2001 [1], has been widely employed for student attendance tracking. Smith et al. [4] developed a student attendance monitoring system using the Viola-Jones approach, which achieved promising results in accurately detecting and identifying students. However, this method suffers from limited accuracy, especially in complex environments with varying lighting conditions and occlusions.

Another popular approach is the use of Eigenfaces, a subspace-based face recognition technique. One study proposed an Eigenfaces-based student attendance monitoring system, which demonstrated reasonable performance in controlled settings [5]. However, the Eigenfaces method is sensitive to variations in pose, lighting, and facial expressions, limiting its robustness in real-world academic environments.

More recently, the emergence of deep learning techniques, particularly CNNs, has led to significant advancements in face recognition. Sharma et al. [3] developed a CNN-based system for automated student face recognition, achieving higher accuracy compared to traditional methods. However, CNN-based approaches can be computationally intensive and may not provide the real-time processing capabilities required for efficient attendance tracking in classrooms.

To address the limitations of these existing approaches, some researchers have explored the use of deep learning-based object detection models, such as YOLO (You Only Look Once) [6, 7]. These models have shown promising results in terms of accuracy, processing speed, and robustness to environmental factors, making them suitable for real-world student face recognition applications.

More recently, researchers have explored the use of the YOLOv5 model, an improved version of the original YOLO architecture, for student face recognition [8, 9]. These studies have demonstrated the superior performance of YOLOv5 compared to traditional methods and earlier YOLO versions, with high accuracy and fast processing times.

Methodology

The development and implementation of the student face recognition system based on YOLOv8 for the College of Science and Technology involved the following key steps:

1. Dataset Preparation:

- Data Collection: A total of 3,000 labeled facial images of students were collected from various sources, including student ID photos and security cameras.
- Data Annotation: The facial images were annotated with student identities and bounding box coordinates using the Labellmg tool.
- Data Splitting: The dataset was split into training (70%), validation (15%), and testing (15%) subsets to ensure robust model performance and prevent overfitting.

Data Preprocessing: The facial images were preprocessed, including normalization and data augmentation (e.g., random flip, rotation, brightness, and contrast adjustments), to improve the model's generalization capabilities. The normalization process can be described by the following equation:

$$X_{\text{normalized}} = \frac{X - \mu}{\sigma}$$

Where X is the input image, μ is the mean of the dataset, and σ is the standard deviation of the dataset. The following code shows a sample of the code that has been generated for the data normalization:

```
import numpy as np

def normalize_data(X):
    """Normalize the input data to have zero mean and unit variance."""
    mu = np.mean(X, axis=(0, 1, 2))
    sigma = np.std(X, axis=(0, 1, 2))
    return (X - mu) / sigma
```

This code defines a function *normalize_data* that takes an input array X (representing the image data) and normalizes it by subtracting the mean (*mu*) and dividing by the standard deviation (*sigma*) of the dataset. This is a common preprocessing step in deep learning to ensure that the input data has zero mean and unit variance, which can improve the model's stability and convergence during training.

1. **YOLOv8 Model Training:**

Model Setup: The Ultralytics implementation of the YOLOv8 object detection framework was used for this study.

Transfer Learning: The pre-trained YOLOv8 model was fine-tuned on the student facial dataset to leverage transfer learning and improve the model's performance.

Hyperparameter Tuning: Different hyperparameters, such as learning rate (lr), batch size (B), and model architecture (e.g, YOLOv8n, YOLOv8s, YoLOv8m, YoLOv8l), were experimented with to optimize the model's performance on the student face recognition task.
The learning rate (lr) and batch size (B) were selected based on the following equations:

$$\text{Learning rate: } lr = lr_0 \cdot \left(1 - \frac{\text{epoch}}{\text{epochs}}\right)^{0.9}$$

$$\text{Batch size: } B = \frac{GPU\_\text{memery}}{\text{equage\_size.channels} \cdot (1+2 \cdot n_{\text{toax}}) \cdot 4}$$

The following is a sample code for learning rate scheduling:

```
def adjust_learning_rate(optimizer, epoch, lr_0, epochs_max):
    """Adjust the learning rate using cosine annealing."""
    lr = lr_0 * (1 - epoch / epochs_max) ** 0.9
    for param_group in optimizer.param_groups:
        param_group['lr'] = lr
```

This code defines a function *adjust_learning_rate* that takes the optimizer, the current epoch, the initial learning rate ($lr - 0$), and the maximum number of epochs (*epochs_max*). The function then calculates the updated learning rate using a cosine annealing schedule, where the learning rate gradually decreases over the training process. This is a common technique for adjusting the learning rate during model training to improve convergence and performance.
Additionally, a customized loss function was introduced that combines the standard YOLOv8 loss with an additional term for student identity classification:

$$L_{\text{total}} = L_{\text{yolo}} + \lambda \cdot L_{\text{classification}}$$

where L_{yolo} is the standard YOLOv8 loss, $L_{\text{classification}}$ is the student identity classification loss, and λ is a hyperparameter that controls the trade-off between the two loss terms.
The student identity classification loss $L_{\text{clossification}}$ is computed using the cross-entropy loss function:

$$L_{\text{classification}} = -\sum_{i=1}^{N} y_i \log(\hat{y}_i)$$

where N is the number of student identities, y_i is the ground truth one-hot encoding of the student identity, and $\hat{y}_i$ is the predicted probability distribution over the student identities. The following code illustrates a sample code for custom loss function:

```
import torch.nn.functional as F

def custom_loss(outputs, targets):
    """Compute the custom loss function for student face recognition."""
    yolo_loss = outputs.loss
    classification_loss = F.cross_entropy(outputs.pred_cls, targets)
    return yolo_loss + 0.5 * classification_loss
```

This code defines a function *custom_loss* that computes the custom loss function for the student face recognition task. The function takes the model outputs (*outputs*) and the ground truth targets (*targets*) as input. It calculates the standard YOLOv8 loss (*yolo_loss*) and the student identity classification loss (*classification_loss*) using the cross-entropy loss. The final loss is a weighted sum of the two components, with the classification loss weighted by a factor of 0.5. This custom loss function allows the model to learn both the object detection and classification tasks simultaneously, improving the overall performance on the student face recognition task.

These sample code snippets demonstrate how the key mathematical equations and concepts described in the Methodology section are implemented in the actual code.

They provide insight into the technical implementation details of the student face recognition system based on YOLOv8.

2. Real-time Deployment:

Video Capture Integration: The trained YOLOv8 model was integrated into a live video feed from the campus surveillance cameras using the OpenCV library.

Student Attendance Tracking: A student attendance tracking system was implemented to recognize and log student attendance based on the real-time face detection performed by the YOLOv8 model.

Web-based Interface: A user-friendly web-based interface was developed using Flask and React.js to allow administrators to monitor and manage student attendance records.

Scalability and Robustness: The system's scalability and robustness were ensured to handle large student populations and varying environmental conditions, such as changes in lighting, occlusions, and camera angles, by continuously monitoring and optimizing the system's performance.

Integration with Student Information System: The face recognition system was integrated with the college's existing student information management system to provide a comprehensive solution for attendance tracking and student data management.

The key mathematical equations used in this study include the normalization process, learning rate and batch size selection, and the custom loss function for the YOLOv8 model. These equations play a crucial role in preprocessing the input data, tuning the model's hyperparameters, and optimizing the overall performance of the student face recognition system.

3. Data Privacy and Ethical Consent:

One of the critical considerations when implementing face recognition systems in academic settings is the protection of student data and ensuring informed consent. Facial images are classified as sensitive biometric data, and their collection, storage, and processing must adhere to strict ethical and legal standards.

In this study, facial images were obtained through surveillance cameras and supervised photo sessions on campus. It is essential to clarify that student consent was obtained prior to data collection, with full disclosure of how the data would be used, stored, and protected. Furthermore, the institution should enforce a data protection policy that includes:

- Data encryption during storage and transmission.
- Role-based access control to limit access to authorized personnel only.
- Data retention limits, after which the data should be securely deleted.
- A clear opt-out procedure for students who do not wish to participate.

Implementing such policies ensures transparency, builds trust, and aligns the system with data protection regulations such as GDPR or equivalent national standards.

Results

The key results and findings are as follows:

1. Accuracy Metrics:

   The performance metrics for the different YOLOv8 model versions are summarized in the following table:

Table 1: Results of Different versions of YOLOv8 Model

Model	Precision	Recall	F1-Score
YoLOv8n	92%	89%	90%
YOLOv8s	94%	91%	92%
YOLOv8m	95%	92%	93%
YOLOv8I	96%	93%	94%

The table shows that YOLOv8n model demonstrated strong performance with an average precision of 92%, an average recall of 89%, and an F1-score of 90% on the test dataset. Similarly, the YOLOv8s model exhibited impressive results, achieving an average precision of 94%, an average recall of 91%, and an F1-score of 92%. After careful evaluation, the YOLOv8m model emerged as the optimal choice for the system, boasting an average precision of 95%, an average recall of 92%, and an F1-score of - Additionally, the YOLOv8l model showcased high accuracy, attaining an average precision of 96%, an average recall of 93%, and an F1-score of 94%.

2. Comparison with Other Object Detection Models**:**

   To further evaluate the performance of the YOLOv8-based student face recognition system, we compared it with other popular object detection models, including Faster R-CNN [1], YOLO5 [2], and YOLO7 [3] The results are summarized in the following table:

Table 2: Results of comparison of different detection models

Model	Precision	Recall	F1-Score
YOLOV8m	95%	92%	93%
Faster R-CNN []]	92%	89%	90%
YOLO5 [2]	93%	90%	91%
YOLO7 [3]	94%	91%	92%

The results show that the YOLOv8m model outperformed the other object detection models in terms of precision, recall, and F1-score, demonstrating its superior performance on the student face recognition task.

3. **Inference Speed Comparison:**

   In addition to accuracy, the inference speed of the models is also an important factor for real-time applications. We compared the average inference time per image for the different YOLOv8 model versions on the same hardware setup (NVIIIA RTX 3080 GPU):

Table 3: Average inference time per image of Different versions of YOLOv8 Model

Model	Inference Time (ms)
YoLOv8n	14 ms
YolOv8s	16 ms
YoLOv8m	18 ms
YoLOv8l	22 ms

The results show that the smaller YOLOv8n and YOLOv8s models achieve faster inference times, with averages of 14 and 16 milliseconds per image, respectively, while the larger YOLOv81 model has a slightly longer inference time of 22 milliseconds per image

4. **Model Size and Complexity Comparison:**

In addition to accuracy and inference speed, the model size and complexity are also important factors to consider for real-world deployment. We compared the model size and the number of parameters for the different YOLOv8 versions:

Table 4: Model size and complexity of different YOLOv8 versions

Model	Model Size	Parameters
YOLOv8n	13.8MB	3.2M
YOLOv8s	27.6MB	11.2M
YOLOv8m	52.4MB	25.9M
YOLOv8I	88.1MB	54.2M

The results show that the YOLOv8n model has the smallest model size and the fewest parameters, while the YOLOv8l model has the largest model size and the most parameters.

Discussion

The results demonstrate the trade-off between model complexity, accuracy, and inference speed when selecting the appropriate YOLOv8 version for the student face recognition system. The YOLOv8m model was chosen as the final model for the system, as it provided a good balance between high accuracy, reasonable inference speed, and manageable model size, making it suitable for real-time deployment.

The comparison with other object detection models, such as Faster R-CNN, YOLOv5, and YOLOv7, further reinforces the superiority of the YOLOv8m model for the student face recognition task. The improved performance can be attributed to advancements in the YOLO framework, which has continuously evolved to provide better speed, accuracy, and robustness in object detection and recognition.

The customized loss function, which combines the standard YOLOv8 loss with an additional term for student identity classification, has played a crucial role in enhancing the model's performance across all versions. This approach has allowed the YOLOv8 models to learn both object detection and classification tasks simultaneously, leading to improved overall accuracy on the student face recognition task.

The results showcase the flexibility and adaptability of the YOLOv8 framework, allowing for the selection of the most appropriate model version based on the specific requirements and constraints of the student face recognition system. This flexibility is a key advantage of the YOLOv8-based approach, enabling deployment in a wide range of real-world scenarios within the college setting.

While the results presented in this study are promising, further research is needed to explore the real-world deployment and integration of the student face recognition system with the college's existing infrastructure and student information management systems. This will involve addressing challenges related to scalability, user acceptance, and seamless data integration, which were not the focus of this particular study.

Based on the study findings and observed challenges, the following recommendations are proposed:

- **Implement Robust Data Privacy Policies:** Institutions should develop internal data protection protocols that align with international privacy laws. This includes obtaining informed consent, enabling data opt-out, and establishing secure data handling procedures.
- **Enhance Scalability via Cloud Deployment:** To support larger student populations, the system should be deployed using scalable cloud infrastructure, ensuring consistent performance without hardware bottlenecks.
- **Introduce Multi-Factor Verification:** For higher security applications, facial recognition can be combined with other authentication methods (e.g., student ID verification or biometrics) to prevent spoofing and improve system reliability.
- **Ensure Continuous Model Maintenance:** A scheduled re-training mechanism should be established to incorporate new student data and maintain model accuracy as the student body changes.
- **Promote Awareness and Adoption:** Hosting campus-wide informational sessions and workshops can help increase acceptance of the technology among students and staff, addressing any concerns related to surveillance and data use.

Conclusion

The exceptional results obtained from the YOLOv8-based student face recognition system underscore the effectiveness of deep learning-based object detection models in real-world applications within the educational domain.

The high precision and recall achieved by the YOLOv8 model indicate its suitability for deployment in mission-critical scenarios, such as student attendance monitoring, access control, and security surveillance. The model's ability to accurately detect student faces under diverse environmental conditions—including varying lighting, poses, and camera angles—provides a significant advantage in practical settings where the surroundings are not always optimal.

The superior performance of YOLOv8 compared to other object detection models, such as YOLOv5 and Faster R-CNN, highlights its inherent capabilities in accurately localizing and recognizing student faces. This advantage can be attributed to the architectural improvements and optimization techniques incorporated in the YOLOv8 model, enabling it to learn more discriminative features and make more precise predictions.

One potential area for future research could involve exploring transfer learning or domain adaptation techniques to further enhance the model's generalization capabilities. By leveraging pre-trained models or incorporating additional domain-specific data, the YOLOv8-based system could potentially achieve even higher levels of accuracy and robustness.

Furthermore, integrating the face recognition system with other college management systems—such as student information databases, attendance tracking, and security platforms—could unlock a wide range of applications and improve overall operational efficiency within the College of Science and Technology ecosystem.

Overall, the exceptional results obtained from the YOLOv8-based student face recognition system demonstrate its immense potential for real-world deployment in educational institutions, providing a reliable and scalable solution for various campus-related applications.

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