Efficient Human Face Recognition in Real-Life Applications using the Discrete Wavelet Transformation (HFRDWT)

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Abstract Human Face receives major attention and acquires most of the efforts of the researches and studies of Machine Learning (ML) in detection and recognition. In real-life applications, the problem of quick and rapid recognition of the Human Face is always challenging the researchers to come out with powerful and reliable techniques. In this paper, we proposed a new human face recognition system using the Discrete Wavelet Transformation (DWT) named (HFRDWT). The proposed system showed that the use of Wavelet Transformation along with the Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) to represent the features of an image had significantly reduced the face recognition time, which makes it useful in real-life areas, especially in public and crowded places. The Approximation coefficient of the DWT played the dominant role in our system by reducing the raw image resolution to quarter while maintaining the high level of the accuracy rate that the raw image had. Results on ORL, Japanese Female Facial Expression (JAFFE), extended Cohn-Kanade (CK+), Labeled Faces in the Wild (LFW) datasets, and our new Sudanese Labeled Faces in the Wild (SuLFiW) dataset showed that our system obtained the least recognition timing and acceptable high recognition rate compared to the other systems.

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1 Introduction

When it comes to humans' recognition, faces play an essential role in confirming a person's identity. It receives major attention and acquires most of the efforts of the researches and studies of Machine Learning (ML) in detecting and recognizing human faces. This is because faces are easily obtained in real-life conditions without users' interaction [43]. On the contrary to other biometrics, face detection and recognition do not need the collaboration of the subjects to work; in other words, properly installed systems in train stations, airports, and other public places can identify subjects without even being noticed, other biometrics do not have this ability of mass identification. As a result of that, the used techniques and methodologies and the designed recognition systems are getting more accurate and less time day after day. Discrete Wavelet Transformation (DWT) is among those powerful and reliable techniques; it achieves excellent performance and has its wide share in enriching this field of knowledge by giving well-designed solutions [42], whether on its own or by conjunction with other tools [25].

The problem of face recognition can be defined as follows: provided that still or video images are given to you, how could you identify or verify individuals in those images [1]. The solution is that easy: by extracting features and comparing patterns from a predefined database of faces. Some face recognition algorithms can identify facial features by obtaining landmarks from a face image, such as eyes, noses, and lips, and detect the distance between them in order to encode the discriminative information as a consolidated features vector [59]. These algorithms include - but are not limited to -: Local Binary Patterns (LBP) [27], Haar features Transform [49], Histogram of oriented gradients [22] (HOG), Principal Component Analysis (PCA) [30], Scale Invariant Feature Transform (SIFT) [9], and Speeded Up Robust Features (SURF) [58]. Regarding classification algorithms, one might use many of them; for example, Deep Neural Networks, Support Vector Machines (SVM), and decision trees [62].

Deep Learning techniques are among the recent advances in face detection, feature extraction, and model classification underlining the prominence of hierarchical feed-forward methods and offering a good opportunity to build models that adapt across different obstacles in the face recognition field [20, 24, 39, 48, 57, 33]. Though their performance was very efficient, recent researchers usually tended to combine two or more techniques [31, 20] to achieve an accurate recognition rate or to enhance processing timing.

This paper aimed to address the face recognition processing problem by proposing a novel rapid recognition system. The contributions of this work are as follows:

– Proposal for a new human face recognition system named Human Face Recognition system using the DWT (HFRDWT). The proposed system applied the Discrete Wavelet Transformation technique in reducing the face image resolution to quarter which provides robust feature representation.
– HFRDWT system resolved the problem of human face recognition by minimizing the recognition time that can be an essential part of various biometric surveillance and security systems.
– Collection of a new Sudanese faces dataset called Sudanese Labeled Faces in the Wild (SuLFiW), which could contribute to the research community of the face recognition field. To the best of our knowledge, this is the only dataset of Sudanese public face images that is available for research on face detection and recognition.

Extensive experimental studies showed that our proposed system can get better performance compared to other time reduction methods.

The remainder of this paper was organized as follows. The second section presented a review of the most known human face recognition systems. The next section described in details our proposed HFR system focusing on detection, representation, transformation, and recognition techniques used in this paper. In the fourth section, we introduced our new Sudanese Labeled Faces in the Wild (SuLFiW) and its main features and characteristics. Then, we presented our experimental results in section five to underline the robustness of our system compared to state-of-the-art works. Discussion and summarization of the obtained results were showed in section six, and finally the future work was presented in the conclusion section.

2 Related works

In this section, we started by presenting a review on the concept of human face recognition and the systems that shared the same techniques of our proposed system. We discussed specifically the Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) and Discrete Wavelet Transformation (DWT) methodologies that were used in human face recognition field. And finally, we gave an overview on the state-of-the-art works that aimed to reduce the computation time of face recognition in tangible measurements.

2.1 Review on Human Face Recognition Systems

Face recognition is a way of identifying or confirming an individual's identity using a predefined faces database [38]. Figure 1 shows the general architecture of any human face recognition system.

2.1.1 Images Preprocessing

There are some problems associated with the raw face image data, such as, complexity, inaccuracy, and inadequacy [2]. This is why it is essential that the
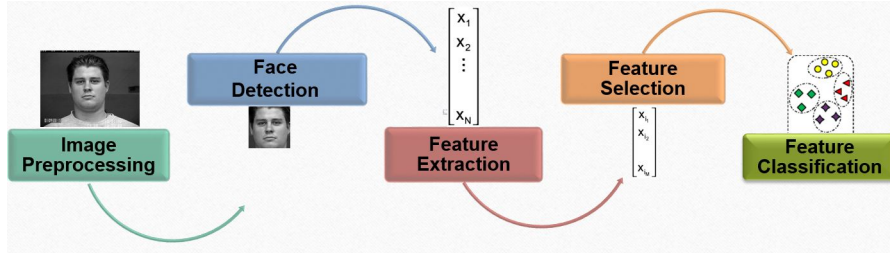
Fig. 1 General Face Recognition System

data should be cleaned and processed to the desired format to achieve the desired results by increasing the system accuracy as well as to reduce its complexity. Several techniques are used to preprocess image data, as examples, image resizing [64], converting images to grayscale [26], and image augmentation [44].

2.1.2 Face Detection

Face detection techniques focus on the localizing and extracting the face region which is considered as the first step to face recognition. With face detection, you can get the information you need to perform tasks like extracting and classifying the face features. Many methodologies for face detection are based on hand-crafted features taken from local image regions with some classifiers that built on top of them, such as Viola and Jones technique [56] which might be the most widely used technique for locating faces area [55]. Based on Haar features, it eliminates any scale and positional variance by computing the difference between black and white rectangles that are scanned all over the image. There are also some other techniques such as: multitask cascaded CNNs [61], VIPL Toolkit [37], and funnel-structured (FuSt) [65]

2.1.3 Feature Extraction

Feature extraction is the transformation of raw data into numerical features that makes the processing easier and preserving the information of the original data set. It is a main activity in any face recognition system. Feature extractor models have many types and techniques, such as, CNN, SIFT, and STIP [21].

Among CNNs architectures, Alexnet [32] has always proven its effectiveness as feature descriptor in ImageNet competition. Alexnet CNN has just eight layers architecture: five convolutional layers at the beginning and three fully connected layers at the end as shown in Figure 2. Its significant features are the simplicity of the layout compared to complicated modern architectures, very computationally efficient, and quick to train [3]. We discussed recent works on deep learning and CNNs next in this section.
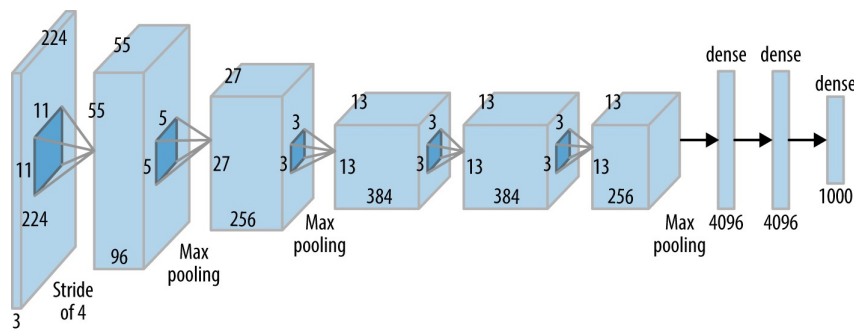
Fig. 2 Alexnet Architecture

2.1.4 Feature Selection

Having irrelevant features can decrease the accuracy rate and make the system learns based on irrelevant features. Feature selection is the process of isolating the most consistent, non-redundant, and relevant features to be used in model construction for the purpose of improving the performance of a predictive system [8] and reducing the computational cost. Feature selection and image compression can be done by the autoencoder which is a special type of neural network that is trained to copy its input to its output [17] and has a positive impact on system performance by reducing the overall cost [19] and makes better use of the system time for recognition purpose. PSO, PCA, and LDA are other techniques used for the same reduction objective.

2.1.5 Feature Classification

The ultimate goal of all face recognition systems is to categorize a huge number of data into different classes [36], in fewer words, classifying the features.

Support Vector Machines (SVMs) are a group of supervised learning methods used for classification [34], regression and outliers detection. The advantages of SVM lie in its effectiveness in high dimensional spaces, memory efficient, and versatile decision functions.

The recent evolvements in deep learning come up with new techniques, such as Softmax which is considered as one of the most efficient classification technique. It converts a vector of numbers into a vector of probabilities [46], where the probabilities of each value are prorated to the related scale of each value in the vector.

2.2 Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs)

Neural networks and similar techniques are convenient for achieving high performance in term of accuracy and robustness [2]. Its efficiency in classifying

a large number of unlabeled facial images in a robust and accurate way gives it preferences for many classic face recognition methods. Furthermore, Due to their feed forward nature and to its ability to extract more abstract level features, CNNs have been applied successfully to a wide range of applications including face recognition field, but though their performance was very efficient, recent researchers usually tended to combine two or more techniques to achieve accurate recognition rate or to enhance processing timing as our system proposed.

Many works combined the CNNs with other techniques such as, Gabor Wavelet filters [16], Haar Cascade [35], and Boltzman machine [52] to produce the optimum accuracy by learning the visual features directly from the face image. In 2020, Fredj *et al.* [7] built a face recognition framework using aggressive data augmentation in unconstrained environment. Another work by Deng *et al.* [13] proposed an addition Angular Margin Loss to obtain features that were highly discriminative. Their system (ArcFace) considered four types of Geodesic Discrete Constraint (GDC). In the other hand, Wu *et al.* [60] proposed another approach of feature discrimination based on intra spectrum and inter spectrum correlation analysis deep network (IDICN) that learns the nonlinear representations of the selected spectra and in the same time aims to minimize the Fisher loss and the discriminant correlation.

High dimensional deep local representation is dsigned by Peng *et al.* [45] who extracted and concatenated deep features via CNN. The initial recognition ranking results can be obtained by comparing the compressed deep features. In the same approach, Sun *et al.* [53] constructed two very deep CNN architectures (Deep ID3) for face recognition by rebuilding stacked Convolution and inception layers. An ensemble of the proposed two architectures achieved a state-of-the-art recognition rate in unconstrained environment database. Furthermore, Alkhaldi *et al.* [47] proposed a mathematical model to select a suitable CNN architecture from the experimental results on (VggFace2) dataset. They changed the class number, image number, and the convolutional layer number and recorded the face recognition accuracy of each.

Some other works explored the inner work of deep face models and the understanding behind its success in the face recognition systems and the effective features that deep model learned. Zhong *et al.* [66] analyzed the classic VGG face network, explored the features captured by the neurons, and conducted investigation on the characteristics of feature such as, diversity, invariant, and discrimination.

2.3 Discrete Wavelet Transformation (DWT)

Recently, wavelet transformations have become very widespread, and new interest is rising on this topic. The main factor is the advantage of relevant feature extraction, reduction of computational time, and increased recognition accuracy rate.

The first attempts using Wavelet Transformation in Human Face Recognition were done by Garcia *et al.* [54] in 2004. They proposed a scheme with two levels Wavelet packet decomposition and the built meaningful and compact feature vectors. The obtained Wavelet packet coefficients were averaged using a class in the dataset and then recognized by RBF Neural Network. Proposed method suggested using Approximation coefficients Matrices which were obtained by three levels of Wavelet decomposition and Fisher's linear discriminant for face recognition.

Lahaw *et al.* [34] suggested a combination of DWT, Independent Component Analysis (ICA), Principal Component Analysis (PCA), and Support Vector Machine (SVM) to use the most important information in the face representation, extraction, and classification. DWT and statistical features were utilized by [4] to sort pixels-based face recognition system. The DWT was applied on Low Pixel Value (LPV) matrix to generate Low and High frequency, while the statistical measure was applied to (HPV) to compute central tendency features.

Khan *et al.* [29] developed a method based on Particle Swarm Optimization (PSO). It utilized the features extracted from texture and wavelet domain.

In the last two subsections, we have presented a systematic study of deep learning and Wavelet Transformation systems effects on face recognition performance. We observed that the studied models scored 100% significant recognition rate on some datasets, but did not touch the computational complexity these models suffer from. For this reason, given a proper architecture and transformation configurations, a deep learning model can perform remarkably in reducing the computational timing of face recognition systems.

2.4 Review on computational reduction techniques based HFR systems

Khalajzadeh *et al.* [28] proposed a hierarchal structure based CNN to provide a robust information processing. They used a small CNN and share its weight between the whole input face image pixels. This method reduced the number of free parameters and the training time without compromising the high test data accuracy rate.

Contributions in this field also focused on a powerful face representation to achieve high accuracy for human recognition rate. Deep Face Recognition with deep presentation named VIPLFace Net was used in [37] which had 10-layer deep CNN, seven Convolutional layers and three fully-connected layers. This method achieved less training and testing time when compared to AlexNet.

Shallow CNN was utilized by [40] to investigate the face regions segments effect on the face recognition rate. The portions that had been used tested were the full face, half face, eyes, single eye, mouth and half of the mouth. The paper demonstrated that using the shallow CNN reduced the recognition accuracy rate but with less computationally time required.

Divya *et al.* [10] headed the same way of [40] and tested the full face and the upper face by using Hidden Markov Model (HMM) and Singular Value De-

composition (SVD) Coefficients. Face image had been portioned to blocks and each block was featured by SVD parameter. Moreover, seven state HMM had been used to cover face details. This approach led to small number of features and resized the image into a small size too. The proposed recognition system was tested on two bench-mark datasets and showed a remarkable reduction on computational complexity and memory consumption.

Table 1 shows details of the state of the art works and the related HFR systems sorted by earliest first. It depicts the steps of these systems to detect, represent, and recognize the human faces.

Although these works achieved good results in reducing computational time of human face recognition, much more work on improving the dimensionality reduction is required. That's why we proposed a new system that utilizes the DWT capabilities in feature reduction to minimize the recognition processing time.

3 Proposed Human Face Recognition (HFRDWT) System

In this paper, we proposed a new HFR system using the DWT in order to reduce the processing time of human face recognition. This section described all the steps required to form the proposed system named HFRDWT and a summary of the differences between the proposed HFRDWT versions with regard to the different objectives that each version aimed to serve.

3.1 Description of the HFRDWT

We proposed a new HFR system that comes in three variants: HFRDWT_V1, HFRDWT_V2 and HFRDWT_V3. Each variant has different architecture starting from face detection and ends with face classification and recognition. Figure 3 depicts the three variants' architectures of the proposed system which consists of five steps sequentially. The Image Preprocessing step is not mentioned below because in the HFRDWT system we started the work with the raw facial images in the datasets.

3.1.1 Face Detection

Firstly, we used Viola and Jones technique [56] in the proposed system, as a face detector. It generates images that contain only the person's face and removes all unnecessary appendages to facilitate the image recognition process. Figure 4 presents the implementation of Viola and Jones on two sample faces from LFW and SuLFiW faces datasets.

Table 1 Details of the related work.

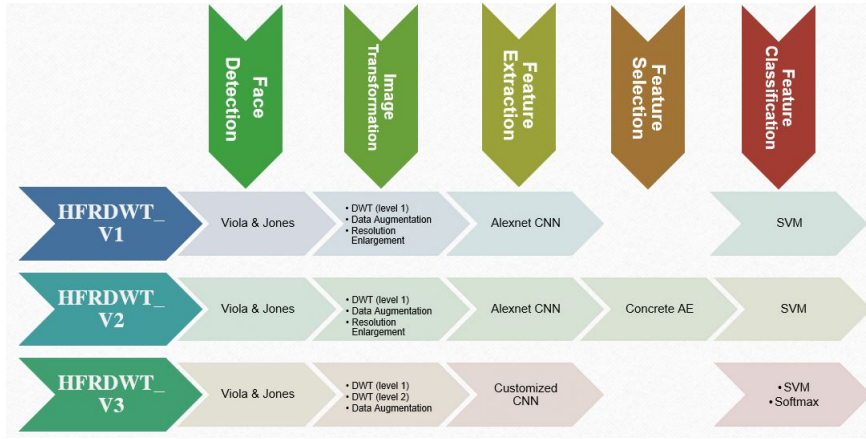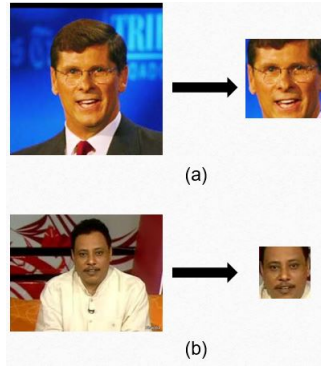| Reference	System	System Steps
Arya *et al.* [4] 2019	Noise-robust low-resolution SIFT	-Extraction: SIFT -Classification: Euclidean distance
Ben *et al.* [7] 2021	CNN + aggressive data augmentation	-Detection: multi-task cascaded CNN -Extraction: CNN -Classification: Softmax + center loss function
Choudhary *et al.* [10] 2021	Singular Value Decomposition (SVD) + Hidden Markov Model	-Detection: Viola and Jones -Extraction: SVD -Classification: Hidden Markov Model
Cuculo *et al.* [11] 2019	Sparsity-Driven Sub-Dictionary Learning Using Deep Features (SSLD)	-Extraction: VGGface CNN -Selection: LDA -Classification: k-LiMapS Classifier
Divya *et al.* [15] 2019	DWT + Statistical Features	-Transformation: DWT -Extraction: Statistical Features -Classification: ANN
Dumitrescu *et al.* [16] 2019	Neural Networks + Global Gabor Features	-Extraction: Gabor Features -Classification: ANN + KNN
Ghazal *et al.* [18] 2020	Curvelets, Invariant moments features and SVM	-Extraction: invariant moments features -Classification: SVM
Khalajzadeh *et al.* [28] 2013	Hierarchical Structure CNN	-Extraction: CNN -Classification: Softmax
Khan *et al.* [29] 2018	LBP + DWT + PSO + DFT	-Detection: VIPL Toolkit -Extraction: Deep CNN -Classification: Softmax
Lahaw *et al.* [34] 2018	DWT+PCA+SVM	-Preprocessing: 2D DWT -Extraction: PCA, ICA or LDA -Classification: SVM
Liu *et al.* [37] 2017	VIPLFaceNet	-Detection: Viola and Jones -Transformation: LBP+DWT -Selection: PSO -Classification: Euclidean distance classifier
Melaugh *et al.* [40] 2019	CNN	-Detection: Viola and Jones -Extraction: CNN -Classification: Softmax
Mulyono *et al.* [41] 2019	PCA-eigenface	-Extraction: PCA -Classification: Euclidean distance
Senthilkumar *et al.* [50] 2020	Bag Of Visual Words (BOVW)	-Extraction: SIFT -Classification: SVM
Sun *et al.* [51] 2020	Fuzzy Convex-Concave Partition + Local Gradient Number Pattern (FCCP_LGNP)	-Extraction: LGNP -Classification: kNN
Xu *et al.* [61] 2018	Projection Neural Network-Based iterative method (PNNBIM)	-Detection: multitask cascaded CNNs -Extraction: Facenet -Selection: PCA
Yee *et al.* [63] 2020	Laplacian Completed Local Ternary Pattern	-Extraction: Laplacian filter (CLTP) -Classification: LapCLTP
Zhang *et al.* [65] 2018	Face Patches strategy	-Detection: funnel-structured (FuSt) cascade schema -Extraction: CNN -Classification: CNN

Fig. 3 Overview of the HFRDWT system

Fig. 4 Implementation of Viola and Jones on two sample faces: (a) LFW, (b) SuLFiW faces datasets

3.1.2 Image Transformation

For the purpose of filtering and compressing the detected faces images, Discrete Wavelet Transform (DWT) was used in the proposed HFRDWT system as an analog filter that captures both frequency and location information [5] showing great efficiency in such tasks. Moreover, Applying the DWT as a descriptor reduced the resolution of the detected faces images to a quarter by dividing it into four coefficients, Approximation, Diagonal, Horizontal, and Vertical [12] which can be expressed by the following equation:

$$F(a,b) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} f(x)\psi_{(a,b)}^{*}(x)dx \qquad (1)$$

where the $*$ is the complex conjugate symbol and ψ is a function which is chosen arbitrary if it obeys certain rule [14]. Hence, DWT produced four more

image datasets, one for each coefficient of DWT. Figure 5 demonstrates a sample of the resulted images after applying DWT on the detected faces of JAFFE dataset.

The easiest and most common way to reduce overfitting on images is to enlarge the dataset artificially using a label preservation transformation (data augmentation) that allows to produce transformed images from the original image with very little computation by flipping and mirroring images horizontally. Another way of transformation technique used in this work is the resolution enlargement, the raw and the four DWT images datasets were scaled to $227*227$ to fit the resolution of the pre-trained Alexnet Fully Connected layer.
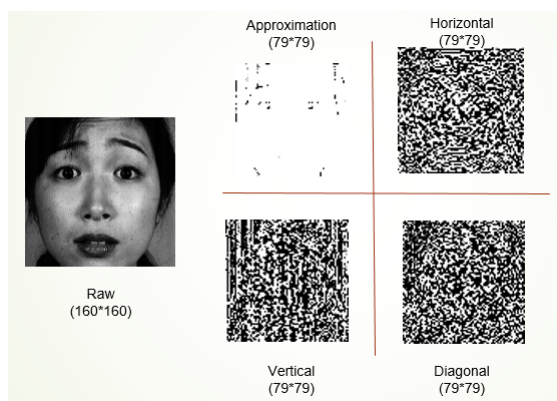

Fig. 5 Applying DWT on a sample of JAFFE dataset

3.1.3 Feature Extraction

The raw images as well as the four wavelet-transformed images were fed to two types of CNNs to produce five feature vectors. The first is the pre-trained Alexnet and the second one is a customized CNN with four convolutional layers at the beginning and two fully connected layers at the end. The contributions of this paper are not depending on the selection of the best CNN architecture, instead, the DWT is the major factor that has the dominant role in reducing the processing timing. Therefore, the customized CNN was selected due its simplicity and efficiency in achieving good results in face recognition rate.

3.1.4 Feature Selection

In this paper, selecting the most important features for face recognition process was done by using Auto Encoder technique, specifically the Concrete Autoencoder as described in [6]. The Concrete Autoencoder is a comprehensive A differentiable method for selecting global features, which effectively selects part of the most useful features and at the same time learns a neural network to reconstruct the input data from those selected features.

3.1.5 Feature Classification

For the purpose of recognizing human face images, two techniques were used in the HFRDWT system: SVM and Softmax to facilitate the provision of a decision weight on each tested image of the five image datasets. We used other tools to enhance the accuracy rate: Top-k accuracy and Majority voting. Top-k accuracy method computes the number of times where the correct label is among the top k of the classifier distribution. Its goal is to produce improved results or reduce the likelihood of an unfortunate selection of a poor one. A majority Voting is an integrated machine learning model that combines predictions from several other models. In the case of classification, the predictions for each label are aggregated and the label with the majority vote is predicted.

3.2 Summary of the different HFRDWT architectures

In this section, we presented a comparison between the different HFRDWT architectures that were proposed in this paper which is summarized on Table 2. Some techniques are common and have been used in all architectures of the HFRDWT system. These include Viola and Jones, the DWT (level 1), Data Augmentation, and SVM classifier. Some other techniques are specific for just one architecture or two, such as, the Resolution Enlargement, Alexnet CNN are applied in the HFRDWT_V1 and HFRDWT_V2, while the DWT (level 2), the customized CNN, and Softmax classifier are used specifically in HFRDWT_V3. Finally, the Concrete Autoencoder is just utilized in HFRDWT_V2.

4 Sudanese Labeled Faces in the Wild (SuLFiW) dataset

This section described the process of creating a new Sudanese dataset for face expression detection and recognition purposes named SuLFiW.

Sudanese faces are characterized by their wide variety in skin-colors, shapes and ethnicities, which makes a great deal of challenge in detection and recognition systems.

Table 2 Summary of the different HFRDWT variants.

Architectures	HFRDWT_V1	HFRDWT_V2	HFRDWT_V3
Design Objective	Recognition Rate Enhancement		Processing Time Reduction
System Steps:			
1. Face Detection	Viola and Jones		
2. Image Transformation	DWT (level 1)		DWT (level 1) and (level 2)
	Data Augmentation		
	Resolution Enlargement		No Resolution Enlargement
3. Feature Extraction	Alexnet CNN		Customized CNN
4. Feature Selection	None	Concrete AE	None
5. Feature Classification	SVM		SVM & Softmax
Accuracy Enhancement	Majority Voting		top-k

The objective of SuLFiW is to bridge this gap and provide consistent and comprehensive dataset for significant practical analysis. SuLFiW dataset will focus mainly on face expression recognition which is also useful for identity recognition via face detection and it will be helpful for gender classification systems too. In the other hand, we will not take into consideration any illumination or model posing change.

Fig. 6 Sample images from SuLFiW dataset

SuLFiW dataset includes a set of frontal human faces of Sudanese people who are representing many categories in Sudanese Society which were collected from Google Images as shown in Figure 6. Table 3 demonstrated the different categories that comprise the SuLFiW dataset. It consisted of 600 persons of both genders (with majority of Males models) aged between (20-90) years old. Seven standard facial expressions were existed in SuLFiW dataset, these expressions were: Neutral, Anger, Disgust, Fear, Happy, Sad and Surprise. The image itself consisted of all head parts. We had followed the same construction and labeling process of LFW dataset creators in [23].

The SuLFiW advantages are:

- The first Sudanese dataset to provide facial expressions.
- The first Sudanese dataset to provide gender classification.
- The first Sudanese dataset to provide such wide variety of categories representing all the Sudanese society.
- Non-restricted environment for analysis.

Table 3 SuLFiW dataset categorization.

Number	Category	No. of models
1	Politicians	88
2	Scientists	18
3	Religious	25
4	Sportsmen	54
5	Poets	81
6	Writers	49
7	Businessmen	12
8	Actors	53
9	Media	74
10	Artists	146
Total		**600**

5 Experimental results

In this section, we presented our experimental testbed, compared systems and performance evaluation parameters. Then we described all the experiments that were conducted in the HFRDWT system in order to verify its efficiency compared to other related works.

5.1 Experimental testbed and Compared systems

Experimental testbed: We conducted several experiments on a variety of benchmark datasets. The HFRDWT system was evaluated by testing it on various size benchmark frontal faces datasets and on SuLFiW dataset.

ORL: The ORL Database of Faces is set of face images taken between 1992 and 1994. The database was used for a face recognition project carried out in the Cambridge University Engineering Department. All the images were taken against a homogeneous dark background with the subjects in an upright frontal position.

JAFFE: The JAFFE database consists of 123 images with size 256*256 posed by 10 Japanese females and photographed with constant illumination and unified background. From JAFFE database, we considered all 213 images.

LFW: The unconstrained environment is considered harder than many other constrained datasets. LFW has become the standard benchmark for facial recognition in wild performance evaluation in the last decade. Extensive work has been done to leverage the limits of accuracy on it, however, the impressive progress has been obtained when using modern deep learning techniques. For data augmentation purpose, we produced more images by horizontally flipping

and mirroring images in the training set.

CK+: This database consists of 123 models aged between (18-50) years of which the females are the most with 69% and with different ethnicity groups. Those set of images are digitized to 640*490 pixels with 8-bit depth. We took all 123 models

SuLFiW: The New Sudanese dataset for face recognition, expression detection and gender classification as presented in Section 4. SuLFiW consists of 600 persons and 5400+ gray and color images of which are realistic social media photos that contains the persons in diverse poses, activities and events.

Table 4 shows more details on our experimental testbed. The datasets have been ordered from the oldest up to the latest with a clear vision of the number of images used for the training and testing sets. Figure 7 displays samples from all the datasets used in this paper.

Table 4 List of datasets used to evaluate the HFRDWT system.

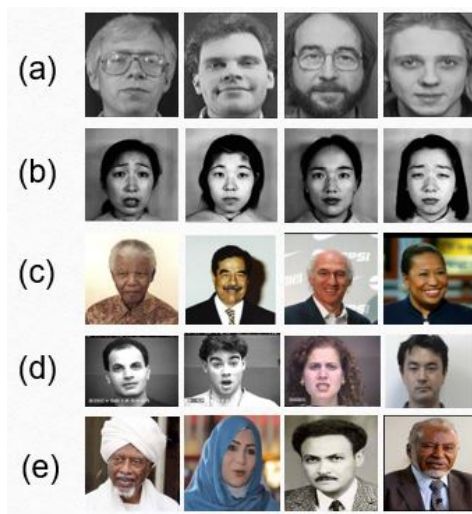| Dataset	#Subjects	Size	Training Sz	Testing Sz	Type	Resolution	Year
ORL	41	410	328	82	Gray	$70 * 80$	1994
JAFFE	10	213	173	40	Gray	$256 * 256$	1997
LFW	5,749	13,233	10,586	2,647	Color	$250 * 250$	2007
CK+	121	10,260	8,254	2,006	Gray+Color	$640 * 490$	2010
SuLFiW	600	5,448	4,358	1,090	Gray+Color	$250 * 250$	2020

Fig. 7 Sample images from all datasets: (a) ORL, (b) JAFFE, (c) LFW, (d) CK+, (e) SuLFiW faces datasets

Compared Systems: In our experiments, the HFRDWT system was compared to some state of the art HFR systems which the aim was to reduce human time processing [28, 37, 40, 10]. We compared the HFRDWT also with other previous works that used the DWT technique [29, 34, 15]. Table 5 shows details of the compared systems.

Table 5 Compared Systems.

Reference	System	Objective/s	Dataset/s
Choudhary *et al.* [10] 2021	Singular Value Decomposition (SVD) + Hidden Markov Model	Processing Time Reduction + Recognition Rate Enhancement	ORL CK+
Divya *et al.* [15] 2019	DWT + Statistical Features	Recognition Rate Enhancement	ORL JAFFE
Khalajzadeh *et al.* [28] 2013	Hierarchical Structure CNN	Processing Time Reduction + Recognition Rate Enhancement	ORL JAFFE
Khan *et al.* [29] 2018	LBP + DWT + PSO + DFT	Recognition Rate Enhancement	JAFFE CK+
Lahaw *et al.* [34] 2018	DWT+PCA+SVM	Recognition Rate Enhancement	ORL
Liu *et al.* [37] 2017	VIPLFaceNet	Processing Time Reduction + Recognition Rate Enhancement	LFW
Melaugh *et al.* [40] 2019	CNN	Processing Time Reduction	JAFFE CK+

Performance Evaluation: Inclusive practical experiments have been conducted to discover the most favorable human face recognition system that yields the best results.

The first two HFRDWT architectures started with cropping the face images to 227∗227 in order to match the prerequisite resolution of Alexnet' Fully Connected layer (FC), and if the input image is a gray scale, it was converted

to RGB by replicating the single channel to obtain a 3-channel RGB image. The third architecture cropped the faces but kept the same resolution of the raw images. Then applying the Discrete Wavelet Transformation (DWT) to the detected images of faces is necessary to produce four more image datasets, one for each coefficient, that is, Approximation, Diagonal, Horizontal, and Vertical.

The CNN is strong enough to extract sufficient information by using only row pixel data. Therefore, we employed CNN as our base network and a fully connected layer is then used to extract features from the input facial images.

The (DWT+CNN) hybrid system made a significant improvement by first applying encoder-decoder on the features with different values for learning rate, regularization and hidden neurons, and then feeding the result on labeled data to an SVM or Softmax classifier. This idea was inspired by [15] who suggested a hybrid model to improve the performance of CNN on some benchmark Datasets.

A multi-class SVM and Softmax were trained using 80% of the images and the remaining images for testing. The training and testing process was repeated 10 times giving 10-fold cross validation recognition rate. Finally, measuring the average time for training and testing for each dataset were calculated and recorded. To gain better performance in recognizing faces, majority voting and top-k accuracy techniques were used in the system. When using such powerful enhancement techniques, the face recognition rates were up to 100% in some bench mark datasets.

It is worth mentioning that the first two architectures of the HFRDWT system had achieved high face recognition rates on the bench mark datasets. In the other hand, the third architecture (HFRDWT_V3) reduced the features dimensionality which leads subsequently to a reduction of the training and testing process while maintaining the good recognition rates, which outperformed the state-of-the-art systems with different structures and data augmentation techniques.

We took the advantage of the deep learning features in Python to implement the aforementioned system.

5.2 Experiment I: Evaluation of the proposed architectures on JAFFE dataset

In this part, we evaluated the HFRDWT system with the three variants on the JAFFE dataset. Figure 8 shows a comparison between the accuracy rates of the different proposed architectures of HFRDWT system on the five image sets (Raw, Approximation, Diagonal, and Vertical sets) of JAFFE dataset, and highlights that the third variant of the HFRDWT system (HFRDWT_V3) along with the DWT Approximation coefficient and the Softmax classifier had the best performance compared to the other variants. The effect of the DWT technique on the processing time is very remarkable in Figure 9, especially when calculating the training and the testing time separately. The training

and testing time were reduced by 26% and 12% respectively when utilizing the DWT Approximation coefficient. That is why we adopted HFRDWT_V3 system to test it on the remaining datasets: ORL, CK+, LFW, and SuLFiW.
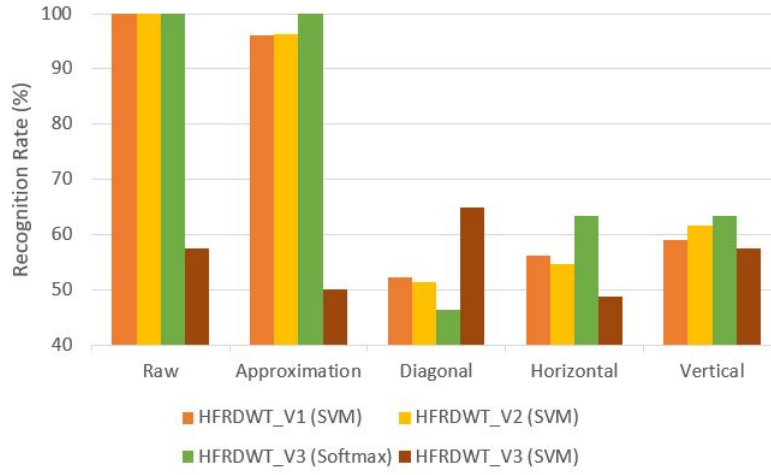

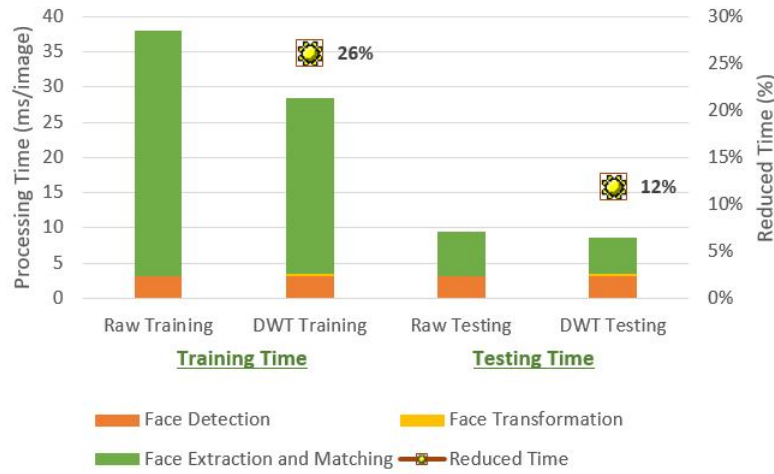**Fig. 8** Evaluation of the Recognition Rates of all HFRDWT Architectures on JAFFE dataset

Fig. 9 The Processing Time of HFRDWT_V3 on JAFFE dataset

5.3 Experiment II: Evaluation of HFRDWT_V3 on JAFFE, CK+, LFW, and SuLFiW datasets

In this part, we implemented the HFRDWT_V3 system on all datasets in the testbed, i.e. JAFFE, ORL, CK+, LFW, and SuLFiW datasets. The application of HFRDWT_V3 was evaluated on two levels of the DWT in all the datasets as shown in Figure 10 and Figure 11. Although the minimization of the resolution in the first DWT (Wav (1)), the recognition rates were almost close to the recognition rates of the raw face images. In the other hand, the second level DWT (Wav (2)) recognition rate was very low compared to the raw and the first DWT (Wav (1)) recognition rates.

Regarding the reduction on processing time of training and testing for all datasets, Figure 12 depicted the efficiency of (Wav (2)) in reducing the processing time compared to (Wav (1)).
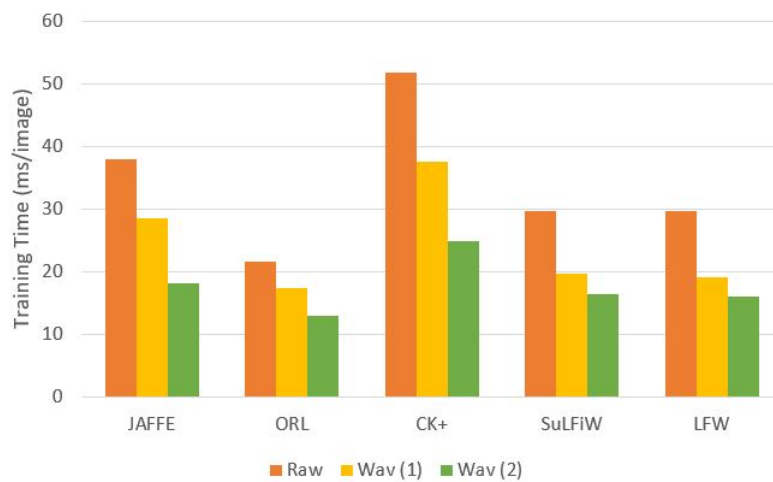

Fig. 10 Training Time of HFRDWT_V3 with two DWT levels on JAFFE, ORL, CK+, SuLFiW, and LFW datasets

5.4 Experiment III: HFRDWT_V3 efficiency compared with other state-of-the-art works

Many works had discussed the issue of enhancing the Face Recognition rate and the processing time related to that. Table 6 verified the efficiency of our HFRDWT_V3 system on recognizing the human face images and on the minimizing the computational time needed to process and recognize these images.
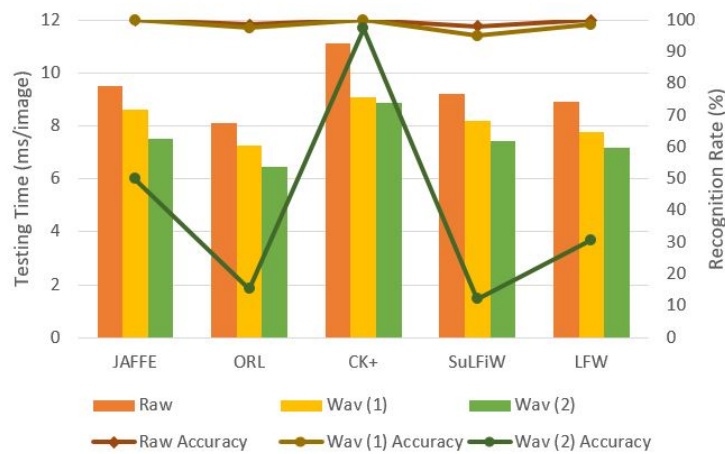
Fig. 11 Testing Time and Accuracy Rate of HFRDWT_V3 with two DWT levels on JAFFE, ORL, CK+, SuLFiW, and LFW datasets
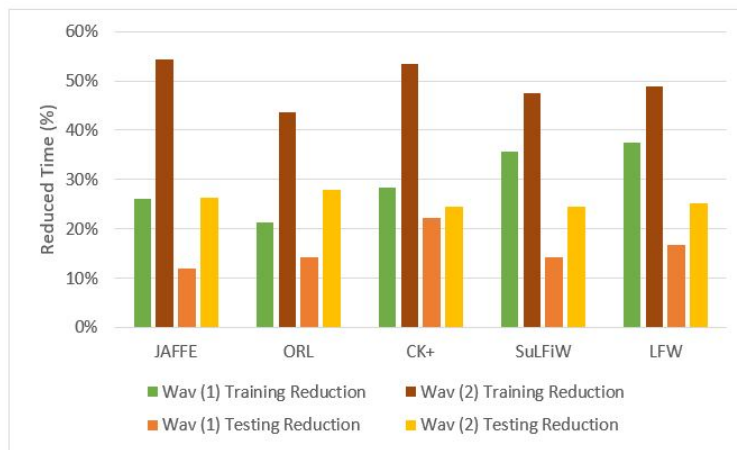

Fig. 12 The Reduction on processing Time of HFRDWT_V3 with two DWT levels on JAFFE, ORL, CK+, LFW, and SuLFiW datasets

Table 6 Comparative study between HFRDWT_V3 and 7 HFR methods on JAFFE, ORL, CK+, and LFW. AR: Accuracy Rate; TrnT: Training Time; TesT: Testing Time

System	JAFFE			ORL			CK+			LFW		
	AR (%)	TrnT (ms/img)	TesT (ms/img)	AR (%)	TrnT (ms/img)	TesT (ms/img)	AR (%)	TrnT (ms/img)	TesT (ms/img)	AR (%)	TrnT (ms/img)	TesT (ms/img)
Choudhary et al. [10] 2021				99.25	320	150	100.00	500	60			
Divya et al. [15] 2019	100.00			99.50								
Khalajzadeh et al. [28] 2013	100.00	193		97.50	292							
Khan et al. [29] 2018	98.80						98.60					
Lahaw et al. [34] 2018	100.00	193		96.00	292							
Liu et al. [37] 2017										98.60	150	
Melaugh et al. [40] 2019	76.56	91					87.32	161				
HFRDWT 2022	100.00	28	9	97.42	17	7	100.00	38	9	98.48	19	8

6 Discussion

Human face Recognition is a challenging field. Each year new systems are developed, published, and perhaps commercially distributed. In our work, we have showed that the using of a simple customized CNN with the Approximation Wavelet Transformation could lead to a huge enhancement in the process of the recognition time. This enhancement which reached to 40% of the raw images timing in some datasets is vital for real life applications that need every millisecond of processing time. Another finding in this paper is the non-significance of the second level of the DWT in the HFR rate although it saves more than half of the time. One of the reasons of this degradation might be the very low resolution these images had, and the other reason was the noise occurred when transforming an already Approximation transformed images that wiped the raw images .

7 Conclusion

Face recognition is a difficult task in computer vision; most systems need large number of labeled examples per class for training purpose. Therefore, constructing a robust invariant system is an essential step toward finding a solution to face recognition problems. The HFRDWT system resulted in an efficient model for feature representation and classification using a few number of labeled examples even in unconstrained environment. It is noteworthy that though we have paid some cost in training phase to extract and represent the features, but that leads to a fast, accurate and integrated model for recognition. Taking advantage of the combination of deep learning techniques, hand-engineered features and ensemble methods, extensive experiments have been carried out on four various size well-known benchmark faces datasets, namely, ORL, JAFFE, CK+, and LFW. The experiments demonstrated that our hybrid system improved the performance of extracting facial characteristics and the efficiency of face classification, and achieved state-of-the-art performance under unconstrained environments, pose variations and heavy occlusions. We have also introduced the new Sudanese Faces in the Wild dataset (SuLFiW), which is the first dataset to cover the Sudanese faces' expressions and genders in the wild, its objective is to bridge that gap and provide consistent and comprehensive dataset for significant practical analysis.

For this approach, we have trained all the models from scratch, which leads to undesirable increment in processing time. Therefore, more enhancements need to be carried out in the system to avoid this limitation; a good example for it is using Transfer Learning technique. Moreover, in the future work, we are considering the extension of our approach to cover color images as well as gray scale images. Another extension would be the implementation of the system on facial emotion recognition, age, gender prediction and other demographic soft information recognition of whose performance suffers from uneven distribution

of training data. This will permit us to explore the efficiency of our hybrid system in tackling much more challenging tasks in the visual recognition field.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Acknowledgment

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