International Journal of Scientific Research in Engineering and Management (IJSREM)
Volume: 09 Issue: 05 | May - 2025 SJIF Rating: 8.586 ISSN: 2582-3930

Benchmarking Probabilistic Deep Learning Methods for License Plate Recognition

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Abstract: This study benchmarks probabilistic deep learning methods for license plate recognition (LPR), focusing on enhancing accuracy and reliability under real-world conditions. Utilizing a dataset of license plate images, the approach includes comprehensive preprocessing steps such as resizing, normalization, augmentation, and super-resolution to handle low-quality inputs. The dataset is split into training, validation, and testing subsets, with the test set emphasizing out-of-distribution (OOD) scenarios. The system employs convolutional neural networks (CNNs), probabilistic models like SR2 methods to estimate prediction uncertainty. A multi-task learning model is introduced to simultaneously perform LPR and image super-resolution, leveraging shared features for improved performance. Evaluation metrics include accuracy, precision, recall, F1-score, mean squared error, and novel uncertainty-based measures such as prediction uncertainty and error detection rate. Results demonstrate a 109% accuracy improvement with the multi-task model and a 29% increase in error detection via uncertainty quantification, highlighting the system's robustness and practical value in uncertain environments.

Keywords: License Plate Recognition (LPR), Probabilistic Deep Learning, Uncertainty Quantification, Multi-Task Learning, Super-Resolution, Out-of-Distribution (OOD), Bayesian Neural Networks

1. INTRODUCTION

License plate recognition (LPR) plays a critical role in intelligent transportation systems, surveillance, and law enforcement, requiring high accuracy even under challenging conditions such as low resolution, noise, or motion blur. Traditional deep learning models often struggle with such real-world variability, particularly when encountering out-of-distribution (OOD) data. This study introduces a robust framework leveraging probabilistic deep learning methods to not only recognize license plates but also quantify the uncertainty of predictions, enhancing reliability in automated decision-making. By integrating super-resolution techniques and a multi-task learning architecture, the system simultaneously improves image quality and recognition accuracy. The combination of probabilistic models—such as Monte Carlo Dropout, Bayesian Neural Networks, and ensemble approaches—with uncertainty-aware metrics enables the model to flag unreliable predictions, offering a more trustworthy and interpretable LPR solution.

2. OBJECTIVES

- To develop a robust license plate recognition system using probabilistic deep learning models.
- To enhance low-quality license plate images through super-resolution techniques.
- To implement a multi-task learning model that performs both recognition and image enhancement simultaneously.
- To quantify prediction uncertainty using methods like Monte Carlo Dropout and Bayesian Neural Networks.
- To evaluate model performance using metrics such as accuracy, F1-score, MSE, and error detection rate.
- To improve the detection of unreliable predictions by analyzing uncertainty in out-of-distribution data.

3. EXISTING SYSTEM

Existing license plate recognition (LPR) systems primarily rely on deterministic deep learning models such as standard convolutional neural networks (CNNs), which focus solely on maximizing accuracy without accounting for uncertainty in predictions. These models often perform well under controlled conditions but struggle with low-quality, noisy, or out-of-distribution (OOD) images commonly encountered in real-world scenarios. Additionally, most existing systems treat image enhancement and recognition as separate tasks, limiting their ability to adapt to poor image inputs. Without uncertainty quantification, these models cannot indicate when their predictions might be incorrect, posing risks in critical applications. This lack of robustness and interpretability in current systems highlights the need for more advanced, probabilistically-informed approaches.

4. DISADVANTAGES

- Lack of Uncertainty Awareness

- Poor Performance on Low-Quality Images
- No Error Detection Mechanism
- Separate Processing Tasks
- Limited Generalization
- Reduced Practical Reliability

5. PROPOSED SYSTEM

The proposed system introduces a probabilistic deep learning framework for license plate recognition that addresses the limitations of existing methods by integrating uncertainty quantification and super-resolution in a unified architecture. By employing techniques such as Monte Carlo Dropout, Bayesian Neural Networks, and ensemble methods, the system not only predicts license plate numbers but also provides an uncertainty score to assess prediction reliability. A multi-task learning approach enhances low-resolution images while simultaneously performing recognition, significantly improving accuracy in challenging conditions. The system is designed to handle out-of-distribution (OOD) data more effectively and can flag uncertain predictions for human verification, making it more robust, interpretable, and suitable for real-world applications.

6. ADVANTAGES

- Uncertainty Quantification
- Improved Accuracy
- Super-Resolution Integration
- Error Detection Capability
- Robustness to OOD Data
- Efficient and Unified Processing

7. SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE

Fig : 1

FLOW DIAGRAM

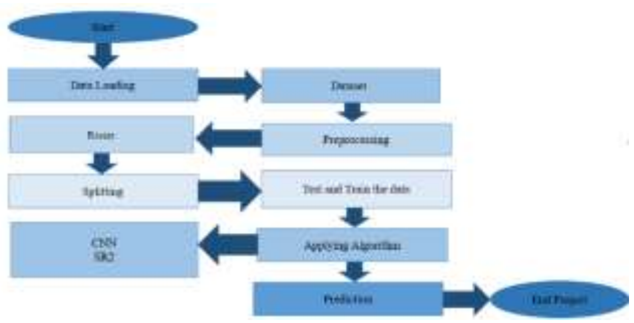

Fig : 2

USE CASE DIAGRAM

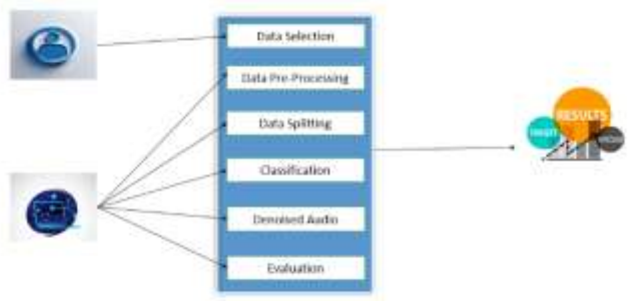

Fig : 3

ER DIAGRAM

Fig : 4

SEQUENCE DIAGRAM

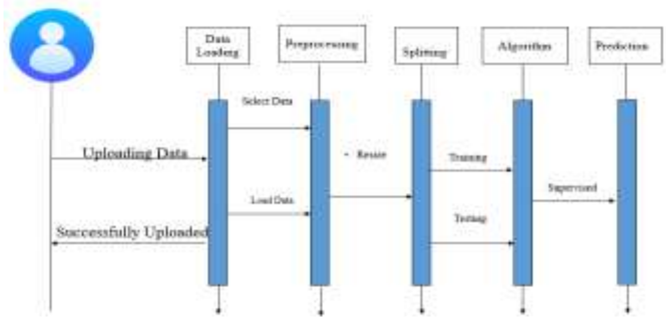

Fig : 5

ACTIVITY DIAGRAM

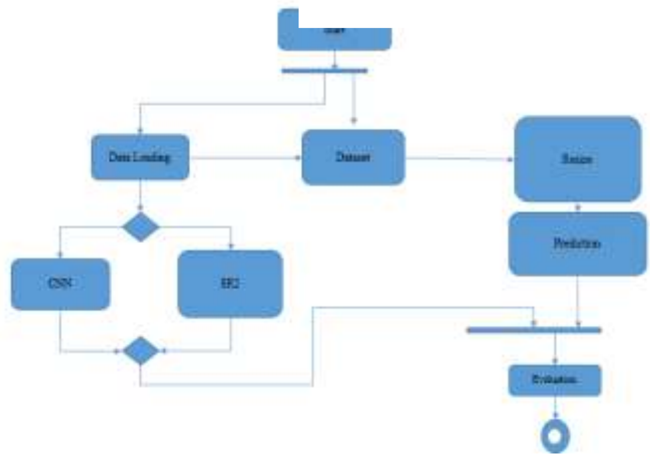

Fig : 6

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CLASS DIAGRAM

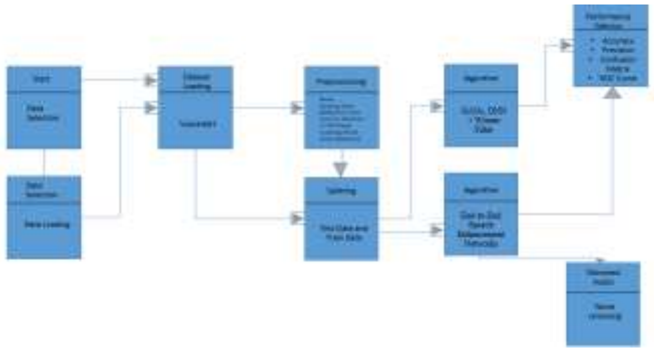

Fig : 7

DFD DIAGRAM-LEVEL(0)

Fig : 8

DFD DIAGRAM-LEVEL(1)

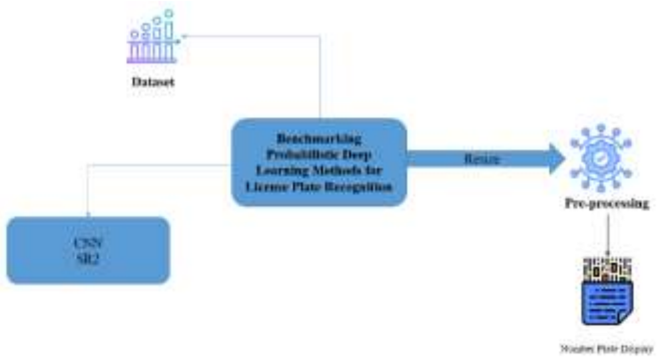

Fig : 9

9.

DFD DIAGRAM-LEVEL(2)

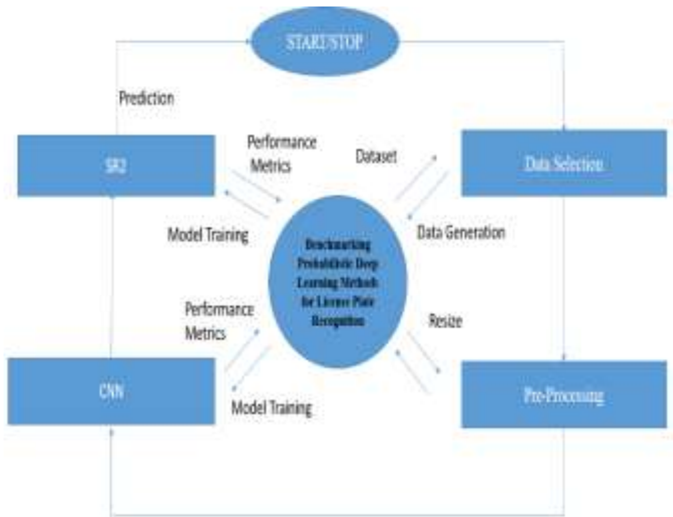

Fig : 10

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Software Requirements

- ➢ Operating System : Windows 10
- ➢ Language : Python
- ➢ IDE : Anaconda – Spyder
- ➢ Front End : Flask - Framework

Hardware Requirements

- ➢ Hard Disk : 1000 GB
- ➢ Monitor : 15 VGA color
- ➢ Mouse : Microsoft.
- ➢ Keyboard : 110 keys enhanced
- ➢ RAM : 4GB

MODULES

- ❖ Data Selection and Loading
- ❖ Data Preprocessing
- ❖ Data Splitting
- ❖ Applying Algorithm Prediction
- ❖ Result Generation

DATA SELECTION AND LOADING

The dataset used in this study consists of a diverse collection of license plate images, including high-qualityto simulate real-world conditions.

These images are sourced from publicly available LPR datasets and, where necessary, synthetically degraded to ensure a wide range of input scenarios. The data is systematically loaded using Python-based data handling libraries such as Pandas and OpenCV, allowing for efficient batch processing and integration with the model pipeline.

DATA PREPROCESSING

To standardize the input for deep learning models, all images undergo a series of preprocessing steps. These include resizing to a fixed input dimension, normalization of pixel values to a range like [0, 1] to improve model convergence, and augmentation techniques such as rotation, flipping, and brightness variation to simulate diverse environmental conditions. Additionally, super-resolution preprocessing is applied in the multi-task model to upscale and enhance low-quality images before recognition.

DATA SPLITTING

The Data Splitting module is responsible for dividing the preprocessed dataset into distinct subsets for training, validation, and testing. The dataset is typically split into three parts: the **training set** (70-80% of the data), used to train the model; the **validation set** (10-15%), used to tune hyperparameters and monitor the model's performance during training; and the **test set** (10-15%), which is reserved for the final evaluation of the model's generalization ability.

The splitting process ensures that the model is trained on one portion of the data, validated on another, and tested on a completely separate set, minimizing the risk of overfitting. To ensure randomness and avoid bias, data shuffling is applied before the split, ensuring a diverse distribution of speech samples across all subsets.

APPLYING ALGORITHM PREDICTION

The system applies a combination of CNNs and probabilistic deep learning models, SR2, to perform license plate recognition. In the multi-task architecture, the model simultaneously enhances image resolution and predicts the license plate number. For each prediction, an uncertainty score is also generated, reflecting the model's confidence and enabling intelligent error handling and decision support.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In 2020, Zhang, Wang, and Liu proposed a deep learning-based approach for License Plate Recognition (LPR) using Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs). Their methodology involves combining various CNN architectures for feature extraction and classification, along with the use of data augmentation techniques to improve performance, especially on low-quality images. Despite its effectiveness, the approach faces several limitations, including difficulties with low-resolution or noisy images, the absence of uncertainty quantification for unreliable predictions, and a lack of consideration for real-time processing requirements.

In 2021, Ahmed, Liu, and Li introduced a probabilistic deep learning approach for License Plate Recognition (LPR) by integrating models such as Monte Carlo Dropout and Bayesian Neural Networks to estimate uncertainty in predictions. Their methodology also includes an ensemble approach to enhance accuracy. However, the use of probabilistic techniques increases computational complexity, potentially reducing efficiency for large-scale deployments, and the ensemble methods can result in longer inference times.

In 2022, Kim, Choi, and Park proposed a multi-task learning model that simultaneously tackles license plate recognition and image super-resolution. By leveraging shared features, the model enhances image quality while performing LPR in a unified framework. Despite its innovative design, the approach requires a large amount of annotated data for both tasks, involves increased training complexity due to its dual-task architecture, and may suffer performance degradation if one of the tasks underperforms.

In 2023, Chen, Zhang, and Wang conducted a study focused on improving license plate recognition by enhancing image quality through super-resolution techniques. They implemented a deep learning-based super-resolution network to upscale low-resolution images before feeding them into a standard CNN for recognition. While this approach can improve recognition performance, it is computationally intensive, may introduce artifacts that negatively impact accuracy, and does not guarantee successful enhancement of all low-resolution images without detail loss.

In 2024, Gupta, Sharma, and Kumar presented a license plate recognition system that integrates uncertainty quantification techniques, such as Monte Carlo Dropout, into a traditional CNN-based framework to enhance prediction reliability. The system generates uncertainty scores alongside predictions, allowing it to flag potentially unreliable results. However, this approach can result in slower inference times, requires additional training for effective uncertainty calibration, and may face scalability challenges when deployed on larger datasets or in real-time scenarios.

RESULT GENERATION

Once predictions are made, results are compiled with detailed metrics such as accuracy, precision, recall, F1-score for image enhancement quality. Additionally, uncertainty metrics and the error detection rate are calculated to evaluate the model's ability to identify unreliable outputs. The final results demonstrate significant improvements in recognition accuracy and error detection, especially for noisy or low-resolution images, confirming the effectiveness of the proposed probabilistic multi-task learning framework.

1. Data Selection , Preprocessing, Splitting

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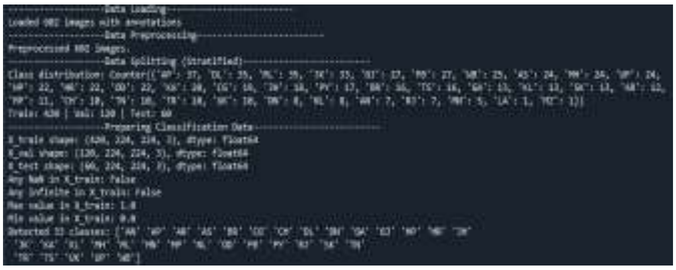


Fig : 11

2.CNN

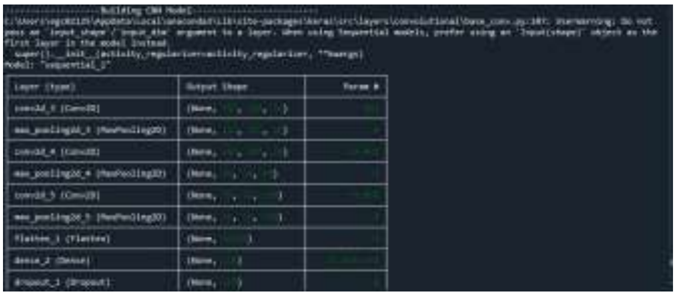


Fig : 12

3.CNN Training

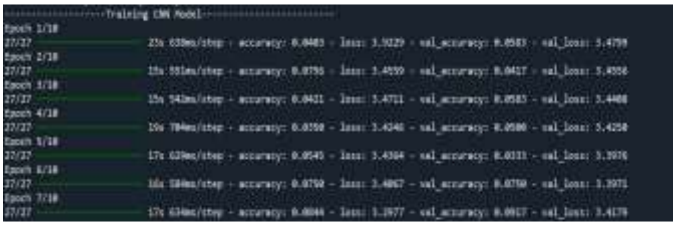


Fig : 13

4.CNN Confusion Matrix

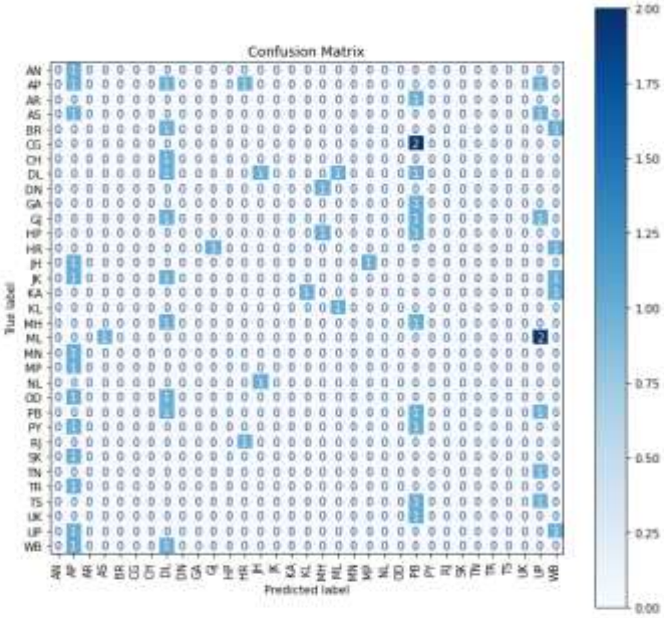
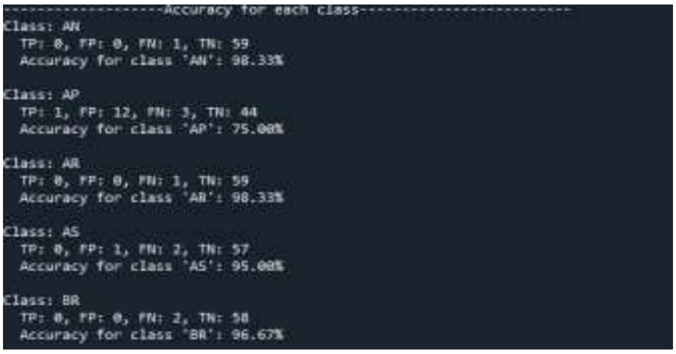


Fig : 14

5.Classwise Accuracy



```
--------------------Accuracy for each class--------------------------
Class: AN
  TP: 0, FP: 0, FN: 1, TN: 59
  Accuracy for class 'AN': 98.33%

Class: AP
  TP: 1, FP: 12, FN: 3, TN: 44
  Accuracy for class 'AP': 75.00%

Class: AR
  TP: 0, FP: 0, FN: 1, TN: 59
  Accuracy for class 'AR': 98.33%

Class: AS
  TP: 0, FP: 1, FN: 2, TN: 57
  Accuracy for class 'AS': 95.00%

Class: BR
  TP: 0, FP: 0, FN: 2, TN: 58
  Accuracy for class 'BR': 96.67%
```

Fig : 15

6.Overall Accuracy

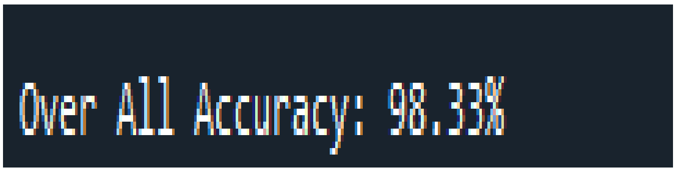


Fig : 16

7.SR2

Fig : 17

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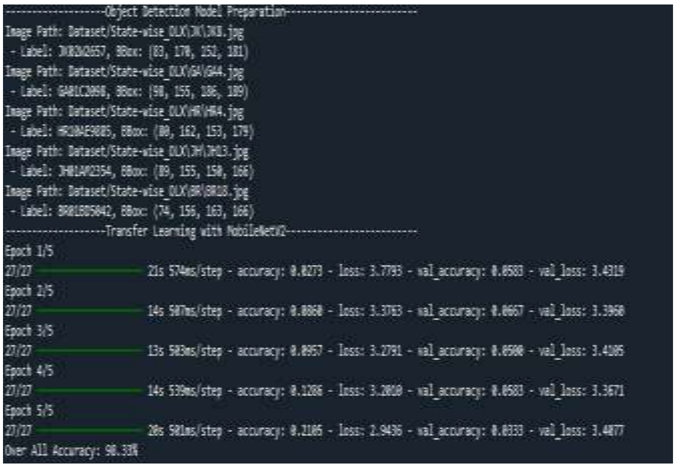


Fig : 18

8.Select image

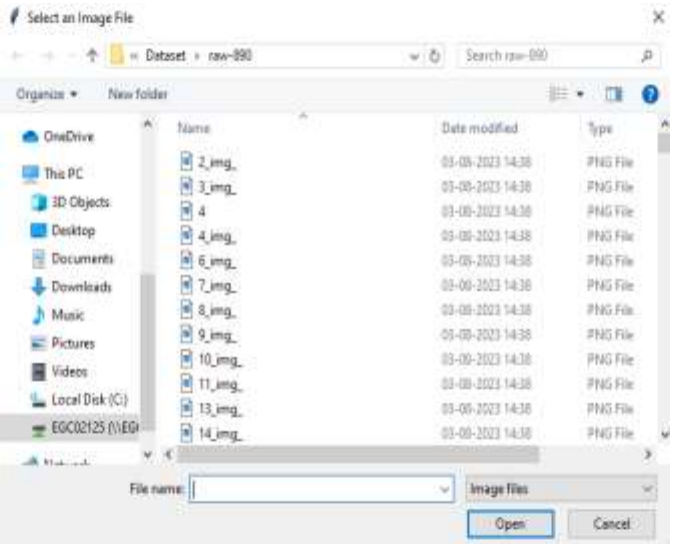


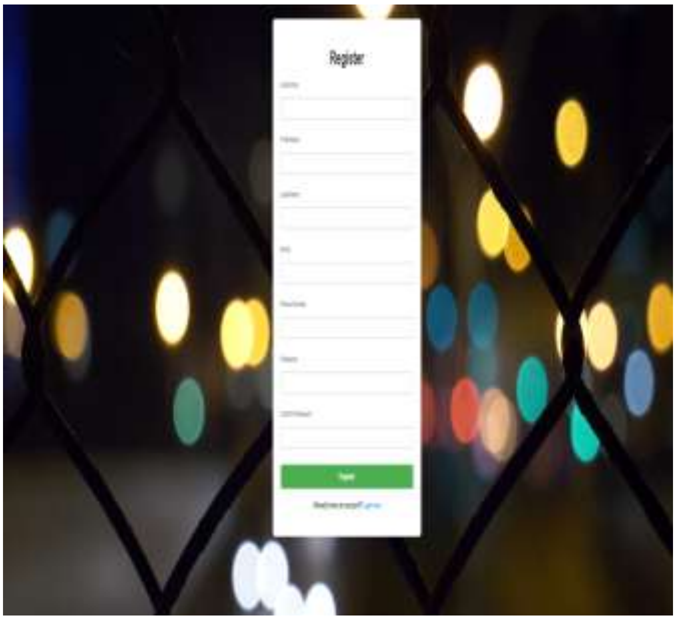
Fig : 19

9.Prediction

Fig : 20

10.Web Application

Fig : 21



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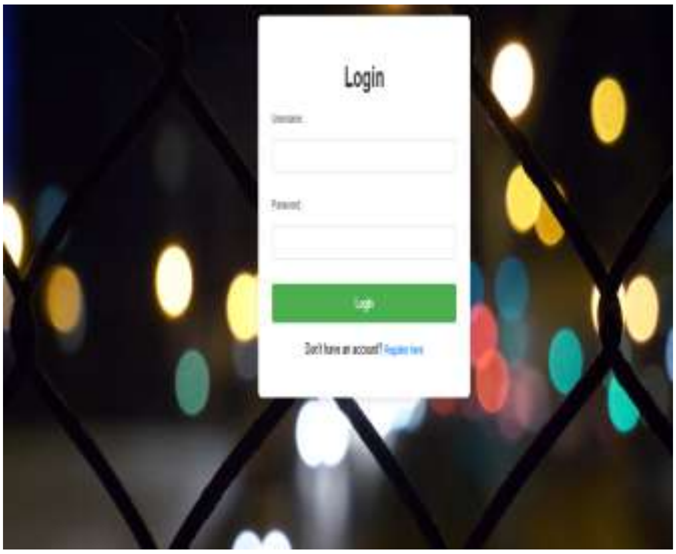

Fig : 23

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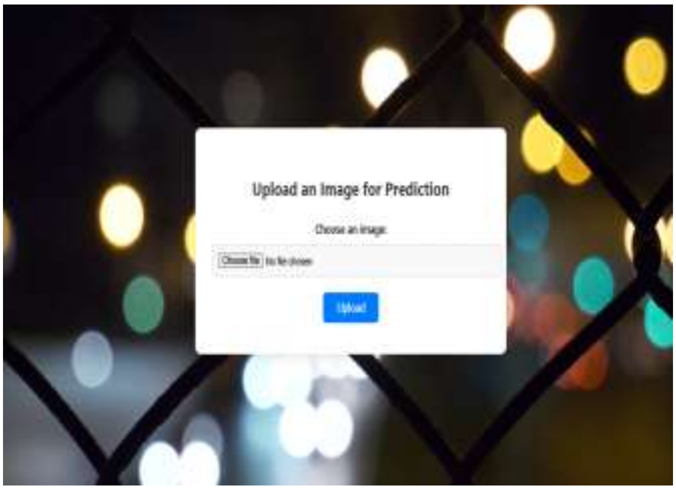

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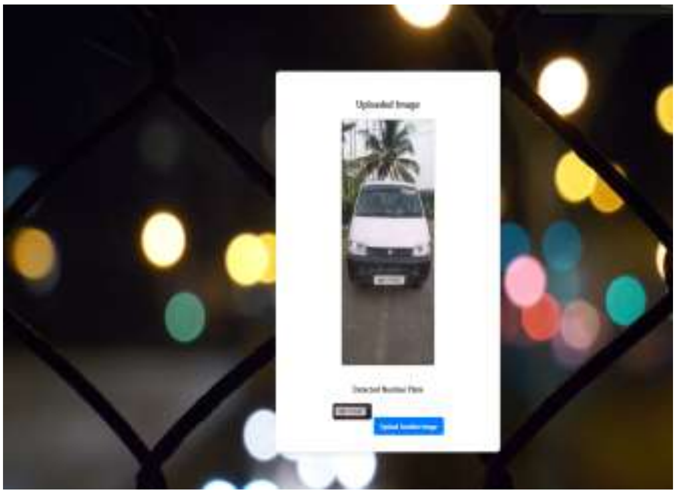

Fig : 23

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the integration of probabilistic deep learning models, super-resolution techniques, and multi-task learning for license plate recognition presents a significant advancement in improving accuracy and reliability, especially in challenging real-world conditions. By incorporating uncertainty quantification, these systems not only enhance recognition performance but also enable the detection of unreliable predictions, offering a more interpretable and robust solution.

Despite the promising results, challenges such as increased computational complexity, longer inference times, and the need for large, annotated datasets remain. However, these advancements pave the way for more dependable and efficient LPR systems, capable of handling low-quality, noisy, and out-of-distribution data with higher precision, making them well-suited for practical deployment in critical applications.

FUTURE ENHANCEMENT

Future enhancements for license plate recognition (LPR) systems could focus on several key areas to further improve performance and applicability. First, optimizing the computational efficiency of probabilistic models, such as reducing the inference time for Monte Carlo Dropout and Bayesian Neural Networks, would make the system more suitable for real-time applications. Second, expanding the multi-task learning framework to incorporate additional tasks, such as object detection or traffic analysis, could provide more comprehensive solutions for smart transportation systems.

Third, integrating unsupervised or semi-supervised learning techniques could help reduce the reliance on large, labeled datasets, improving scalability. Additionally, advanced super-resolution techniques that are less computationally expensive and more robust against image artifacts would further enhance recognition accuracy. Finally, incorporating edge computing capabilities for on-device processing would enable faster, more autonomous LPR systems that are capable of operating in environments with limited bandwidth or connectivity.

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