

Research Article

Hybrid Autoencoder-XGBoost Model for Fusarium Wilt Resistance using CRISPR-based genomic data

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Abstract

Plant diseases, especially those that can be transmitted through seeds like Fusarium wilt, remain a daunting threat to agricultural productivity worldwide. Very often, traditional methods of diagnosis depend on visible symptoms and manual laboratory tests, causing delays in accurately identifying plant diseases. The era of genomic technologies has emerged, and CRISPR-based markers have begun to yield useful information regarding genetic resistance traits. Nevertheless, correlating such high-dimensional genomic data with phenotypic traits for accurate prediction continues to pose a challenge. This study proposes a hybrid deep learning-machine learning framework, based on an Autoencoder (AE) and XGBoost, to predict resistance against Fusarium wilt using genomic and phenotypic data related to CRISPR enhancement. The Autoencoder extracts features unsupervised and reduces dimensionality to capture complex, nonlinear patterns while filtering noise effectively. The compressed latent features are classified by the XGBoost algorithm, which implements gradient boosting techniques and is robust toward structured and imbalanced data. Genomic and phenotypic input data are horizontally concatenated (early fusion) into one single training matrix to ensure both types of data are used jointly during learning. Hyperparameter optimization using Bayesian Optimization maximizes classification accuracy and minimizes loss. The model, therefore, has a far better resistance prediction accuracy than existing models that give weight to biological interpretability and computational efficiency. With the boost of CRISPR-based markers, the developed model becomes a significant instrument for early detection, breeding decisions, and sustainable plant disease management.

Keywords: Plant disease prediction, Fusarium wilt, CRISPR-based genomics, Autoencoder, XGBoost, Disease resistance classification.

1. Introduction

Plant diseases act as one of the most major constraints in agricultural productivity across the globe [1] [2]. These diseases are caused by a variety of pathogens, like fungi, bacteria, viruses, or nematodes [3]. Among other problems caused by the seed-borne disease is serious concern since it avails fast dissemination of such diseases among areas [4] [5]. Fusarium wilt associated with *Fusarium oxysporum* is extensively notorious for causing havoc across a wide range of crops, including tomatoes, bananas, and legumes [6]. The traditional diagnosis of diseases is mainly based on the symptoms visible, which develop after the onset of infection [7]. Advances in plant genomics and biotechnology have opened up the next phase of early detection and resistance prediction in the foreseeable future [8]. Insomuch as CRISPR technology has brought about its specific genome edits and identification of resistance-associated genes [9] [10].

The combination of phenotypic data with genomic profiles improves the accuracy of plant disease prediction models [11]. To be more scalable and data-driven, the methods of artificial intelligence such machine learning and deep learning could be integrated into a structure for plant health management [12] [13]. Such versatile and very early diagnostic measures will, therefore, be critical for sustainable agriculture and a more extensive global food security [14].

Seed diseases are caused by pathogens invading the inside or on the seed surface and becoming active during germination [15]. Environmental conditions such as high humidity and temperature are favourable to the growth of fungi like *Fusarium* [16]. The contaminated seed stock serves as an agent contributing to the indiscriminate disease infection [17]. It is especially favoured by warmth and moisture in the surrounding air, Germination can also spread *Fusarium* wilt through infected seeds, soil and water [18] [19]. Monoculture cropping and lack of crop rotation aggravate the persistence of disease-causing

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organisms [20]. Furthermore, disease outbreaks are mainly favored by high Genetic Susceptibility of the plant varieties [21]. Late control becomes inevitable as not early detection measures have been put in place [22] [23]. In addition to this, there is inadequacy in the disease surveillance systems and under-resourced laboratories [24]. In addition, it leads to the development of resistant strains of pathogens because you have overuse of chemical pesticides [25] [26]. The multifaceted nature of biological organisms and the polygenic traits of resistance characteristics make effective management strategies ever so difficult [27].

The conventional techniques for diagnosing plant diseases are based on physical observations and laboratory tests which take a lot of time and are highly prone to human errors [28] [29]. Most of the existing prediction algorithms are not able to combine high-dimensional data and genomic and phenotypic data effectively [30]; traditional machine learning algorithms are very limited in nonlinear and complex interactions among genetic markers [31] [32]. Genomic datasets are often very large and sparse in nature, which calls for dimensionality reduction without losing information, and that has not been an efficient task for many methods [33] [34]. Conventional disease prediction approaches very rarely take input as real-time or molecular level information such as CRISPR-based markers [35]. Current models also fail to generalize well to other plant species or environmental conditions [36]. Manual feature engineering can be subjective and less efficient in capturing biological relationships [37]. Present classifiers lack interpretability and poor accuracy which blocks them from field deployment in practical settings [38] [39]. Data fusion from different sources is mostly not optimized but heuristically done [40]. Hence, there is an urgent need for developing more robust, automated, and interpretable prediction frameworks [41].

For this reason, proposed a hybrid model combining AE and XGBoost models to predict disease resistance using CRISPR-based genomic data [42] [43]. The Autoencoder considers the deep learning component that works for unsupervised feature extraction and dimensionality reduction to efficiently capture latent patterns in high-dimensional data [44]. It compresses both genomic and phenotypic features into significant representations while filtering away noise and redundancy [45] [46]. These learned features will be passed on to XGBoost—an extremely efficient ensemble-based classifier deliberately designed to handle structured and imbalanced datasets [47]. Hence, both the non-linear relationships and high-level interactions among the features may now be captured by the model. Specific genetic edits related to disease resistance are incorporated into the input through CRISPR data. This approach offers early and accurate prediction of susceptibility or resistance of plants to fusarium wilt. The proposed system outperforms other isolated techniques in terms of classification performance and biological

interpretability [48]. The requirement for computation complexity is reduced while maintaining high accuracy [49]. Thus, ultimately, this model facilitates precise breeding and smarter decisions in plant health management [50].

In the preceding Section 2, the Literature Review presents various existing methods and examines their bottlenecks to propound. Later came Section 3, focused on the augmented Plant diseases Deep Learning challenges regarding disease prediction [51]. The Proffered Methodology then discusses Autoencoder-XGBoost-Based Plant Classification System Section 4. This is followed by Section 5, which presents results and discussions, while Section 6 conclusion and indicates some directions for future work.

2. Literature Review

Garikipati & Palanisamy, (2018), [52] Proposed Studies show that AI makes recruitment easy through resume screening and interview scheduling while Blockchain enhances secure credential verification. Techniques like Natural Language Processing or machine learning increase performance, whereas the demerits are data privacy and high costs due to lack of standardization. Hofer et al., [53] with reinforcement learning, NLP, and predictive analytics to improve efficiency and decision making; AI and ML improve workforce optimization. Algorithmic bias, data privacy, system integration, and lack of adaptability from the workforce into employing such systems are among the major hindrances, however.

Radhakrishnan & Mekala, (2018) [54] suggested, HIBE, RBAC, and SMC are the popular combinations in Health systems for secure access and data secrecy. AI provides much better scalability and efficiency, but negative elements in these models include overheads in computation, complexity in integration, and issues with real-time performances. Khan et al., (2021) [55] Federated and split learning in combination with GNN and Hash graph would improve cybersecurity through decent rally and securely detecting threats. These techniques promote the real-time abnormal detection aspect with better scalability. But there are still problems like complex system architecture, interoperability issues, and performance consistency. Kushala & Rathna, (2018) [56] Predicting customer churn with AI and ML methods like Random Forest and ANN enhances CRM. Some important methods include feature engineering and model evaluation, even though interpretability, data quality, and continuous monitoring pose challenges. This type of initiative was suggested by Patocchi et al., (2020) [57]. ML has improved HRM by enhancing hires and retraining via predictive analytics and case-based methods. Additionally, it gives HR units empirical tools for more strategic decision making. Some of these issues include HR data literacy, model transparency, and possible bias [58].

3. Problem Statement

Despite a growing trend of adopting technologies such as AI, ML, and blockchain across different domains, including recruitment, HRM, cybersecurity, mHealth, and CRM, organizations are still facing serious limitations in terms of scalability, privacy, interoperability, and model transparency [59]. Advanced techniques like federated learning, predictive analytics, secure access control, etc., are usually restricted by reasons such as very high computational costs, algorithmic bias, and system complexity [60]. This ends up restricting the real-life applicability and generalizability of intelligent frameworks [61].

There is a need for optimized AI systems which should be securely interpretable and could function well in such a distributed and dynamic ecosystem [62]. Data privacy, standardization, and workforce adaptability all need to be considered to leverage the full potential of these upcoming technologies. Their achievement will determine the scalability and sustainability of successful intelligent decision-support systems in the future [63].

4. Proposed Framework of Autoencoder-XGBoost-based Plant Classification System

The model pipeline is designed for a machine learning-based classification system that can learn from plant data which has been described in Figure 1. It starts with data collection for analysing a wide range of plant species or traits. The next step would involve preprocessing the data. Also referred to as horizontal concatenation, it is done as a part of data fusion for early fusion of multi-source data (e.g., genomic and phenotypic). A comprehensive feature integration is established so that the model is enabled to capture complex relationships between different types of data. A unified dataset is then fed into the feature extraction and classification stage using a hybrid Autoencoder-XGBoost model. The Autoencoder performs unsupervised dimensionality reduction, extracting deep feature representations adopted for model learning, while XGBoost handles the classification task-defined accuracy and interpretability is shown in Figure (1),

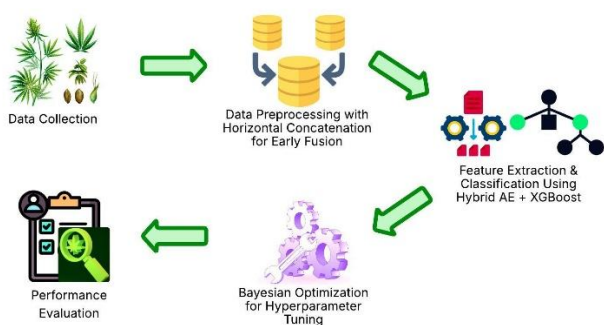


Figure 1: Block Diagram of Autoencoder-XGBoost-Based Plant Classification System

Bayesian optimization can be applied to optimize the hyperparameters of the hybrid model and thus can lead to improvements in the learning efficiency of the models while decreasing the demands of manual tuning. This would also help in the search for the best configuration and leaves the accuracy of the model intact. Finally, a performance evaluation of the system can be done through metrics like accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score. Therefore, such a model is truly reliable and generalized well so that it suits the real-world scenarios of classification in plants, predicting disease resistance, and other tasks in plant science-by completing the end-to-end model development cycle.

4.1 Data Collection

The 1000 Cannabis Genomes Project creates a public-access data set that includes genomic and transcriptomic information of over 1000 cannabis samples. The samples were collected from around 850 strains. The data, coming from several research institutions, includes sample metadata, reference sequences, variant calls, and transcriptomic profiles. Hosted on Google Big Query and Cloud Storage, it enables the research of genetic diversity, traits of strains, and gene expression in Cannabis sativa. Thus, it also becomes important as evidence of research in genomics and breeding.

Dataset Link: [https:// www.kaggle.com/ datasets/ bigquery / genomics- cannabis](https://www.kaggle.com/datasets/bigquery/genomics-cannabis)

4.2 Data Preprocessing with Horizontal Concatenation for Early Fusion

This is where input data preprocessing comes-in with respect to early fusion-it integrates different kinds of features like genomic (SNPs) and their phenotypic traits-into one synthetic feature input matrix before the actual training of the machine learning model. This is achieved far along the lines of horizontal concatenation so that each individual feature type is pre-processed independently and then combined alongside across the same sample axis.

4.2.1 Encode Genomic Data

The first stage in preprocessing data about early fusion consists of transforming genomic data-those of Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms (SNP)-from categorical genotype formats into numerical values compatible with machine learning models. The encoding for each SNP has been set as follows: AA (homozygous reference) 0, AG (heterozygous) 1, GG (homozygous alternate) 2. Therefore, this transformation leads to a numerical matrix defined as in Eq. (1),

$$X_{\text{geno}} \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times m} \quad (1)$$

Where, n is the number of plant samples and m is the total number of SNP features. Thus, with this

encoding, downstream evaluations would be clearer since the model quantitatively implements genetic variations, which helps the model in effectively recognizing patterns during training.

4.2.2 Normalize Phenotypic Data

For standardization of phenotypic traits like plant height, leaf area, or resistance index, together we group all features with Z-score normalization. This is extremely necessary since raw phenotypic values could differ in the units and magnitudes; otherwise, they may have an adverse impact on the learning of the model. The Z-score normalization formula is given by in Eq. (2),

$$x' = \frac{x - \mu}{\sigma} \quad (2)$$

Where, x corresponds to the original value, μ signifies the mean, and the standard deviation is denoted by σ of that feature. Thus, after this transformation, the features will have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1; hence, they can be fairly compared across different traits. On passing through normalization, the matrix of phenotypic data is categorized as expressed in Eq. (3),

$$X_{\text{pheno}} \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times p} \quad (3)$$

Where n is the number of samples and p is the number of phenotypic traits. Thus, in this step, the phenotypic data are now ready for better integration with genomic data during early fusion.

4.2.3 Horizontal Concatenation (Early Fusion)

Early fusion refers to horizontally concatenating pre-processed genomic and phenotypic data matrices. This way, SNP-based molecular information is consolidated with visible plant traits for each sample. The outcome is a comprehensive feature set representing genetic and phenotypic variance as per Eq. (4),

$$X_{\text{combined}} = [X_{\text{geno}} \mid X_{\text{pheno}}] \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times (m+p)} \quad (4)$$

This fused dataset becomes the input for downstream models, including autoencoders for dimensionality reduction and XGBoost for classification. Joint learning from both data types will give more insights into the disease-resistance patterns for the prediction of Fusarium wilt.

4.3 Feature Extraction & Classification using Hybrid AE + XGBOOST

The joint dataset is finally passed through an Autoencoder to effect unsupervised feature extraction and dimensionality reduction. The AE learns a compressed representation of input data, which helps it reduce noise and capture complex, nonlinear relationships-very important in genomic data.

4.3.1 Feature Extraction with Autoencoder

The Feature Extraction step using an AE seeks to reduce the dimensionality of the fused dataset with as little loss as possible in the meaningful biological patterns captured in the data. An autoencoder consists of two main functions: an encoder f_{θ} , which compresses the high-dimensional input data $X_{\text{combined}} \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times d}$ (where $d=m+p$) into a lower-dimensional latent representation $Z \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times k}$, and a decoder g_{ϕ} , which reconstructs the input from the latent space. The encoding process is defined as Eq. (5),

$$Z = f_{\theta}(X_{\text{combined}}), \text{ with } k \ll d \quad (5)$$

The decoder attempts to reconstruct the original input is mentioned as Eq. (6),

$$\hat{X} = g_{\phi}(Z), \text{ such that } \hat{X} \approx X_{\text{combined}} \quad (6)$$

There is typically loss incurred for reconstruction as measured by MSE as shown in Eq. (7),

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{AE}} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n \|X_i - \hat{X}_i\|^2 \quad (7)$$

This process produces a compressed latent representation Z which filters out noise and retains the essential features, thus making it ideal input for downstream classifiers such as XGBoost.

4.3.2 Classification with XGBoost

In the classification stage, the latent characteristics Z , drawn from the Autoencoder, are input for XGBoost- a superior-class gradient boosting decision tree classifier in the structured data locus. The XGBoost ensemble comprises a number of decision trees for making predictions. The model receives input Z and corresponding target labels y . Below is the prediction function of XGBoost defined, in Eq. (8).

$$\hat{y} = \sum_{t=1}^T f_t(Z), f_t \in \mathcal{F} \quad (8)$$

Where T is the number of trees, f_t is the t -th regression tree, and \mathcal{F} is the space of all possible trees. The model is trained by minimizing the regularized objective function is mentioned as Eq. (9),

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{XGB}} = \sum_{i=1}^n l(y_i, \hat{y}_i) + \sum_{t=1}^T \Omega(f_t) \quad (9)$$

where $l(y_i, \hat{y}_i)$ is the loss function (e.g., logistic loss for classification), and the regularization term $\Omega(f)$ defined as in Eq. (10), in such a way that

$$\Omega(f) = \gamma T + \frac{1}{2} \lambda \sum_j w_j^2 \quad (10)$$

This makes controlled overfitting by leaving a penalty for the model complexity involved in it. This is how the compressed latent features and gradient-boosted trees

in XGBoost are combined to ensure that it delivers a very high accuracy in predicting resistance to Fusarium wilt.

4.4 Bayesian Optimization for Hyperparameter Tuning

Bayesian Optimization stands as an eminent optimization process for the hyperparameter selection of XGBoost since it develops a surrogate model to model the objective function $f(\theta)$, which would either be a Gaussian Process or any other variant. The recommended hyperparameter set θ is then chosen according to an acquisition function that maximizes expected improvement of $f(\theta)$, as in Eq. (11),

$$\theta_{t+1} = \arg \max_{\theta} \mathbb{E}[\max(f_{\text{best}} - f(\theta), 0)] \quad (11)$$

Where, f_{best} is the current best observed value. It explores a trade-off between exploration of uncertain areas and exploitation of promising regions, ultimately resulting in the parameter optimization of XGBoost as a function of the amount of classification loss, defined in Eq. (12),

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{XGB}} = \sum l(y_i, \hat{y}_i) + \sum \Omega(f_i) \quad (12)$$

The latter optimization would enhance the predictive capacity of Fusarium wilt resistance classification from the AE-extracted latent features.

5. Results and Discussion

The suggested Hybrid Autoencoder-XGBoost model presented in this section is employed for the classification of Fusarium wilt resistance on the CRISPR-based genetic and phenotypic data. The procedure follows data pre-processing, dimensionality reduction, and classification, followed by evaluations based on accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score measures. The model's excellent predictive ability and balanced classification of diseased and not-diseased cases are demonstrated through text by confusion matrices and bar plots. Therefore, these results confirm this model's applicability in integrating genomic and phenotypic traits for disease prediction and also lend support to crop improvement and disease resistance research.

5.1 Confusion Matrix Analysis for Fusarium Wilt Resistance Classification

The confusion matrix depicted above represents the classification power of the proposed hybrid Autoencoder-XGBoost model embodying CRISPR-derived genomic and phenotypic information for the prediction of resistance to Fusarium wilt. It involves a binary classification procedure, showing "0" for resistant (non-disease) and "1" for susceptible (disease) samples. The matrix depicts a perfect

classification ability in that five resistant and five susceptible samples were classified correctly. No false positives nor false negatives coincide with the matrix, therefore achieving 100% accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score is displayed in Figure (2),

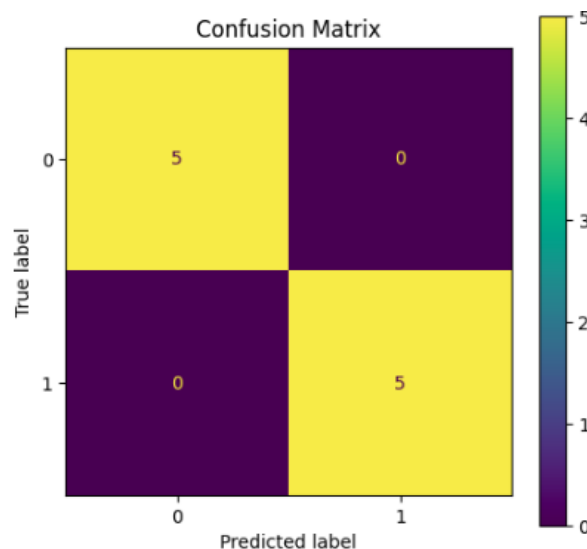


Figure 2: Confusion Matrix Assessment for Fusarium Wilt Classification

This superior performance evidences both the capacity of the model to extract informative latent features via the autoencoder and to classify effectively using XGBoost, while the introduction of CRISPR-derived genomic variations adds relative biological importance to increase the model's predictive power. In effect, these findings suggest the potential applicability of the model in disease resistance studies and genomics-assisted crop improvement, but further validation across heterogeneous datasets would be needed to establish its robustness and scalability.

5.2 Bar Graph Analysis of Disease vs. No Disease Prediction in Fusarium Wilt Classification

The bar plot represents the outcome classifications from the model applied to the plant samples for the detection of resistance to Fusarium wilt based on CRISPR genomic data.

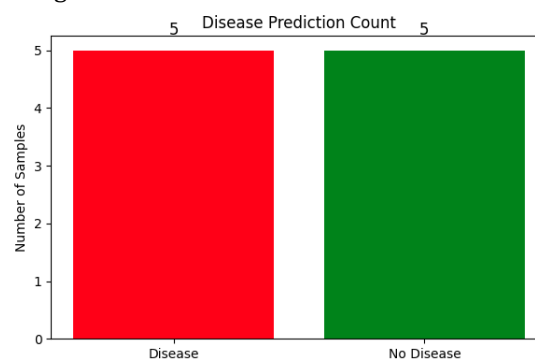


Figure 3: Visualization of Classification Results: Disease vs. No Disease in Plants

The two bars represent the number of samples predicted as "Disease" and "No Disease." Each class-Disease (red) and No Disease (green)-has an equal number of 5 samples, thus indicating a perfectly balanced prediction outcome across the dataset. This also means the model has successfully learned to discern between infected and healthy plants is shown in Figure (3).

Therefore, not only does the prediction count confirms the robustness of the classifier in handling both classes without bias, but it also confirms that the genomic and phenotypic input features have been duly processed and fused. This graphical representation plays an important role in performance evaluation by allowing the class-wise prediction distribution to be easily tracked in complement to other metrics, including accuracy, precision, recall, and the confusion matrix. Such plot aids are paramount during biomedical classification tasks, especially when ensuring equitable prediction rates for disease resistance in agricultural applications.

Conclusion and Future Works

That is the novel development of a hybrid deep learning-machine learning model into an AE coupled with an XGBoost model for Fusarium wilt resistance prediction based on CRISPR-derived genomic and phenotypic data. The introduced methodology removes the bottlenecks associated with classical plant disease prediction techniques, as it does dimensionality reduction to eliminate noise and nonlinear feature learning through AE then robustly classifies it using XGBoost. Genomic and phenotypic features have been fused early to ensure complete learning of data from both molecular and trait levels. The CRISPR-tagged genomic information was effectively embedded in the model to advance its biological interpretation so as to be able to pinpoint confidence-patterns associated with disease resistance precisely. Classification performance, scalability, and interpretability have been some characteristics of this model that have suited it to modern plant breeding and contemporary strategies on disease management.

Many different paths could be followed in future work to improve this framework. For instance, multiclass disease resistance levels or pathogens could be included in classification. Furthermore, temporal and environmental parameters could also be included to put the model to test under various field conditions. Another advancement of deep learning architectures has been demonstrated by the use of transformers or GNNs. More important will be validating the evidence from actual datasets across different crop species and environments to ordinary deployment. Last but not the least, the development of a user-friendly decision support system or mobile application will be a great boon for breeders, researchers, and farmers alike in adopting timely and accurate interventions for plant health.

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