Fruit Quality Classification using Deep Learning and Explainable AI

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FINAL YEAR DESIGN PROJECT REPORT

This Report Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the **Degree of Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and Engineering**

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May 14, 2025

APPROVAL

This Project titled **"Fruit Quality Classification using Deep Learning and Explainable AI"**, submitted by Abdun Nafi Annafi, ID No: **212-15-14755** and Tasnuva Muhtasim, ID No: **212-15-14761** to the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Daffodil International University has been accepted as satisfactory for the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of B.Sc. in Computer Science and Engineering and approved as to its style and contents. The presentation has been held on **14 May, 2025**.

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DECLARATION

We hereby declare that this project has been done by us under the supervision of **Mayen Uddin Mojumdar, Lecturer (Senior Scale),** Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Daffodil International University. We also declare that neither this project nor any part of this project has been submitted elsewhere for the award of any degree or diploma.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work would not have been possible without the support and contributions of many individuals over the past two semesters. We are deeply grateful to everyone who has assisted us in one way or another.

First, we express our heartfelt thanks and gratefulness to the almighty for His divine blessing making it possible for us to complete the **Final Year Design Project(FYDP)** successfully.

We are grateful and wish our profound indebtedness to **Mayen Uddin Mojumdar**, **Lecturer (Senior Scale)**, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Daffodil International University, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Deep knowledge and keen interest of our supervisor in the field of **Deep Learning (Computer Vision)** to carry out this project. His endless patience, scholarly guidance, continual encouragement, constant and energetic supervision, constructive criticism, valuable advice, reading many inferior drafts, and correcting them at all stages have made it possible to complete this project.

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Head of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, for his kind help in finishing our project and also to other faculty members and the staff of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Daffodil International University.

We would like to thank our entire course-mates at Daffodil International University, who took part in this discussion while completing the coursework.

Finally, we must acknowledge with due respect the constant support and patience of our parents.

ABSTRACT

Fruit quality classification is a critical task in agriculture and food industries to ensure standardization and market value. This study evaluates the performance of VGG19, MobileNetV2, ResNet50, custom CNN and BiLSTM for fruit classification using deep learning. A dataset of 3,758 images across seven fruit classes was used for training and evaluation. Among the tested models, MobileNetV2 achieved the highest accuracy (99.48%), making it the most suitable for real-world applications due to its efficiency. LIME (Local Interpretable Model-Agnostic Explanations) was employed to interpret model predictions, verifying that fruit characteristics like color, shape, and texture were key factors in classification decisions. The study highlights dataset imbalance and lighting variations as primary challenges. Future improvements include dataset expansion, hyperparameter optimization, and real-time deployment of the best-performing model. This research provides insights into selecting optimal deep learning models for automated fruit classification, contributing to precision agriculture and quality assurance in food industries.

Keywords: Fruit classification, Deep learning, MobileNetV2, VGG19, ResNet50, Custom CNN, BiLSTM, Explainable AI, LIME, Image processing, Precision agriculture.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This thesis presents an automated fruit grading system using deep learning and Explainable AI to enhance accuracy, consistency, and interpretability in quality assessment. Motivated by the inefficiencies of manual classification, the project developed a CNN-based model that achieved high accuracy and provided visual explanations of its decisions.

1.1 Introduction

Fruit quality grading using manual methods is generally slow, variable, and time-consuming. Deep learning networks like VGG19, MobileNetV2, and ResNet50 offer precise automatic solutions by studying visual features such as color, texture, and shape. These models, however, have the tendency to work as "black boxes," meaning it is not easy to understand their decisions. Explainable AI (XAI) techniques like LIME are able to describe model behavior and allow trust to be built in real-world applications on farms.
Current deep learning models for fruit classification focus mainly on accuracy, ignoring model interpretability and generalization. Most are trained on limited datasets and struggle in real-world conditions like varying lighting or fruit types. This project aims to develop a robust, explainable fruit classification system using deep learning and XAI, ensuring both high accuracy and transparency.

1.2 Motivation

The advance in computational power and the invention of deep learning architectures have enabled the automation of difficult visual tasks like fruit quality classification. It is now possible to fine-tune large pre-trained models like MobileNetV2 and VGG19 with limited resources, enabling high-quality and efficient predictions even on edge devices like smartphones or Web Application. However, without explainability, these highly effective models are still not optimally used in real-world agricultural setups where trust and transparency are most important.

A solution to this issue will reduce the reliance on manual inspection, lower labor costs, and minimize errors in fruit grading. Through the incorporation of explainable AI, the solution not only enhances model interpretability but also wins the trust of stakeholders. This leads to more informed supply chain decision-making, reduces post-harvest losses, and facilitates intelligent, data-driven agricultural practices.

1.3 Objectives

- To develop a fruit quality classification system using deep learning models (VGG19, MobileNetV2, ResNet50, BiLSTM, and a custom CNN).
- To evaluate and compare the performance of these models based on accuracy, computational efficiency, and robustness.
- To implement Explainable AI (XAI) techniques, specifically LIME, for interpreting model predictions and identifying key features used in classification.
- To identify the most suitable model for real-world deployment based on its performance and interpretability.
- To highlight the impact of dataset challenges, such as imbalance and lighting variation, and analyze their effects on model performance.
- To contribute a locally-sourced, diverse fruit dataset that reflects real-world conditions in Bangladesh.

1.4 Methodology

The experiment used a data set consisting of 3,757 images on seven types of fruits taken from various markets around Bangladesh. Resizing and normalizing to a size of 244×244 pixels was applied to images. Five models in deep learning, including VGG19, MobileNetV2, ResNet50, BiLSTM, and custom CNN, were fine-tuned and trained on supervised learning through categorical cross-entropy loss and Adam optimizer.

All models were validated using validation accuracy. MobileNetV2 had the best performance. To enhance transparency, the Local Interpretable Model-Agnostic Explanations (LIME) approach was employed, by which features that affected model predictions (e.g., color, shape, texture) could be visualized. All experiments were conducted on Google Colab using an NVIDIA T4 GPU.

1.5 Project Outcome

- A robust and accurate fruit classification system capable of grading multiple fruit types based on visual quality attributes.
- Identification of the most efficient deep learning model (e.g., MobileNetV2) suitable for real-time applications with limited computational resources.
- Improved interpretability of model decisions through Explainable AI (LIME), helping users understand which features influenced predictions.
- A locally relevant fruit image dataset that reflects real-world market conditions in Bangladesh, useful for future research.
- Insights into model limitations under varying conditions (e.g., lighting, class imbalance), guiding improvements for real-world deployment.
- Potential for integration into mobile or edge devices for on-site fruit grading in farms or markets, reducing labor costs and post-harvest losses.

1.6 Organization of the Report

This report is structured to present a systematic survey of the literature on deep learning and Explainable AI (XAI) for fruit quality classification.

Chapter 1 introduces the problem, motivation, goals, and methodology, highlighting the need for automating grading fruit and injecting transparency in the form of LIME. The chapter concludes with the project outcomes, including the high accuracy of MobileNetV2 (99.48%) and creating a locally based dataset.

Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive background, condensing existing literature on fruit classification, pointing out limitations in explainability and applicability to the real world, and establishing the novelty of this work through multi-grade classification and market-sourced data.

Chapter 3 discusses the research strategy, comprising dataset collection (3,757 images of seven Bangladeshi fruits), preprocessing techniques, model selection (VGG19, MobileNetV2, ResNet50, BiLSTM, CNN with a custom model), and adding LIME for explainability. Project organization and task assignment are also touched upon.

Chapter 4 includes implementation specifics, including the use of Google Colab's NVIDIA T4 GPU, performance metrics, and model comparison. Results verify MobileNetV2's efficiency and robustness, and LIME explanations identify vulnerabilities to background noise.

Chapter 5 discusses engineering standards, ethical issues, and sustainability approaches, including hardware/software standards compliance, societal impact (e.g., job displacement), and environmental benefits through power-efficient edge deployment.

Chapter 6 concludes the research, highlighting key findings, limitations (e.g., dataset imbalance), and possible avenues for future research, such as hyperparameter tuning for ResNet50 and real-time deployment on edge devices.

The report concludes with References, List of Figures, and List of Tables for ease and reproducibility. This structure encourages a natural progression from problem definition to technical execution, with clarity, scalability, and applicability to the real world in agricultural automation.

Chapter 2

Background

Prior research demonstrates deep learning's efficacy in fruit classification (e.g., MobileNet for bananas, YOLOv5 for apples), achieving high accuracy (≥95%) but often neglecting explainability and real-world robustness, with narrow focus on single fruits or controlled environments. This study bridges these gaps by integrating LIME for transparency, testing seven fruit classes under market conditions, and optimizing MobileNetV2 (99.48% accuracy) for scalable, interpretable multi-grade classification.

2.1 Introduction

With the ever-growing demand for quality control for the agricultural industry, specifically in fruit production, there is a pressing necessity for efficient and reliable grading systems. Manual checking is not only time-consuming and unreliable but also prone to human mistakes, and therefore automation through the use of advanced technologies like deep learning is a necessary solution.

In developing such systems effectively, there must be knowledge of the technology at play and what has already been achieved in this space. The background below explores the underlying concepts of image classification, convolutional neural networks (CNNs), and Explainable AI (XAI) that underpin this work.

2.2 Literature Review

Fruits like apples, bananas, Burmese grapes, mango, papayas, tomatoes, and jujube are nutritious and, thus highly valued, and in the agricultural sector, they are broadly cultivated, having a significant impact on the economics of several nations throughout the world. Because of its cultural and economic importance, deciding whether a fruit is edible or not is one of the many difficulties facing the fruit business. Traditional detection methods are inefficient at effectively addressing these issues since they frequently rely on human procedures and are prone to mistakes. Precision agriculture might be significantly impacted by deep learning algorithms, especially when it comes to fruit grade classification. This literature review explores the benefits of using deep learning techniques over more conventional methods for fruit grade classification.

Baglat et al. [10] took a non-destructive banana ripeness detection. Convolutional neural networks (CNN) were performing sufficiently with large datasets, whereas conventional artificial neural networks (ANN) and support vector machines (SVM) attained better performance for small datasets and sensor-related data, respectively. The only shortcoming was the limited data availability.

CNNs were used by Saragih et al. [11] to categorize the banana's ripeness. Two pre-trained models are used, which are MobileNet V2 and NASNetMobile. The transfer learning by fine-tuning approach was applied to train both models, using different epochs and starting layers for unfreezing the model. Image processing, such as using the bilateral filter, was used to remove noise in the image before training. Data augmentation such as horizontal flip, vertical flip, brightness, zoom, shear, rotation, and shifting were applied to add variations to the training data. Among them, MobileNet V2 achieves higher accuracy and faster execution time, with the highest accuracy being 96.18%.

A deep learning method employing a custom CNN model is proposed by Saranya et al. [12] to classify banana ripeness into four stages: unripe, slightly ripe, ripe, and overripe. The study compares its performance with VGG16 and ResNet50, showing that the proposed model achieves 96.14% validation accuracy while being more computationally efficient. Data augmentation techniques such as flipping, rotation, and zooming enhance model generalization. These findings point out the potential effectiveness of a CNN for automated ripeness classification that could also be used in agriculture and food processing.

To get over these speed and accuracy constraints, Xu et al. [13] created a sophisticated apple categorization method based on YOLOv5. It updates the Mish activation function, enhancing the propagation of features with more stability and promoting generalization capability, and the DIoU loss function improves the convergence speed and the accuracy of boundary regression. Besides, a Squeeze Excitation (SE) attention module was used for refinement in feature extraction. Experimental validation showed that the accuracy was 93% and the grading speed was 4 apples per second, which outperformed other conventional methods such as SSD, YOLOv4, and standard YOLOv5.

A deep learning-based technique that uses 3D infrared imaging to identify surface abnormalities as a sign of bruising was presented by Hua et al. [14]. This work has proposed a new method for transforming 3D surface meshes into 2D feature maps, which could be fed directly into state-of-the-art CNNs without structural modifications. The model involved the investigation of different CNN architectures such as AlexNet, VGG-19, and Inception-v3, feature fusion, and transfer learning, allowing it to get an identification accuracy of 97.67% outperforming handcrafted feature extraction methods.

A deep learning-based model for real-time visual inspection using ResNet, DenseNet, MobileNetV2, NASNet, and EfficientNet has been suggested by Ismail et al. [15].. The system carries out the classification of apples and bananas. It is a low-cost grading real-time system based on the Web Application module equipped with a camera and a touchscreen. EfficientNet achieved the best classification accuracy in the test dataset: 99.2% for apples and 98.6% for bananas, and the real-time accuracy reached 96.7% and 93.8%, respectively.

A deep CNN-based web interface classification model was presented by Rahman et al. [16] in order to recognize and classify many kinds of regional Bangladeshi fruits. The study used MobileNet, ResNet-50, VGG-19, and Inception-V3 to classify eight fruit types collected from rural regions. The highest accuracy was achieved by the MobileNet, which outperformed other models in feature extraction with an accuracy of 99.21%. The system also integrates background removal and preprocessing techniques to enhance classification accuracy.

Using a transfer learning technique, Cecotti et al. [17] tested many pre-trained architectures, such as ResNet and VGG, to show how well CNNs performed on grape recognition. In their paper, they have underlined two hot topics that are supposed to be of key importance for increasing the accuracy of detection: input feature spaces (color, grayscale, and color histograms) and data augmentation. Having over 99% accuracy with their models based on ResNet, the authors positioned the CNN-based system as one of the strong solutions for grape segmentation and classification tasks.

Using cutting-edge single-shot Multibox Detector models, Aguiar et al. [18] investigated the identification of grape bunches at various phases of their development. Their study employed a publicly available dataset with 1,929 images captured under diverse lighting conditions and annotated for early and medium grape growth stages. The work achieved a good balance between computational efficiency and the accuracy of results by deploying quantized 8-bit models on low-power TPUs. Among them, SSD MobileNet-V1 performed the best, reaching 66.96% mAP at an IoU threshold of 20%, which indicates its potential in real-time field applications.

A deep learning-based method that uses RGB and infrared imaging modalities to grade mango quality was suggested by Bhole et al. [19]. The grade of the mango was classified based on parameters such as size, maturity, and bruises by employing a pre-trained model SqueezeNet through transfer learning. Importantly, training with thermal imaging was four times faster than with RGB and showed similar results: 91.2% for size, 94.4% for maturity, and 92.27% for grading. This non-destructive approach underlines the contribution of thermal imaging to overcoming problems created by varieties such as Langra, which do not present external color changes during the ripening process.

Using CNN architectures such as Inception v3, ResNet 152, and VGG 16, Iqbal [20] suggested a deep learning-based method for categorizing and scoring eight different types of mango for classification. With data augmentation techniques like rotation, translation, zooming, and flipping, the system has reported up to 99.2% in classification accuracy and 96.7% in grading accuracy by employing Inception v3. The study elucidates the flexibility of convolutional neural networks in the classification of mango varieties according to color, size, shape, and texture to international grading standards.

A highly optimized CNN was created by Zheng et al. [21] for effective mango grading. Based on the ultra-lightweight algorithm SqueezeNet, their system had a great balance of high accuracy at 97.37% while achieving an average of just 2.57 milliseconds for recognition per image. This study puts forward that batch size, epoch, and learning rate tuning super-parameters provide very relevant clues in achieving optimal performance even while handling a smaller dataset. Furthermore, when alternative models, like ResNet-50 and MobileNetV2, are evaluated for this system, the superior robustness of accuracy has, again proved its usefulness in handling nondistructive agricultural automation scalably.

A non-destructive method for classifying papaya ripeness using both machine learning and transfer learning techniques was developed by Behera et al. [22]. Local Binary Pattern (LBP), Histogram of Oriented Gradients (HOG), and Gray Level Co-occurrence Matrix (GLCM) were paired with classifiers K-Nearest Neighbor (KNN), Support Vector Machine (SVM), and Naïve Bayes in the Machine Learning paradigm. Among them, HOG feature weighted KNN model has fully correct in 0.0995 seconds of training time. Similarly, VGG19 outperformed others, such as ResNet50 and AlexNet, by fine-tuning using a transfer learning approach and yielded the accuracy of 100% in 1 minute and 52 seconds.

A CNN system with the VGG16 architecture is proposed by Al-Masawabe et al. [23] to categorize papaya fruits into three maturity stages: immature, partially developed, and mature. They used a total of 300 high-resolution images for training with labeled data and got 100% accuracy, which took approximately 112 seconds for training. A few of the key methodologies mentioned are image preprocessing, resizing of images to 128x128 pixels for efficient computation, and augmentation of images to make the model more robust.

To categorize papaya development phases, Ratha et al. [24] have suggested a hybrid model that uses deep learning features acquired by VGG16 and the discrete wavelet transform. The proposed hybrid system used high-level features from DWT and VGG16 fused in parallel and classified them by using a Support Vector Machine. This approach achieved an accuracy of 98% and an AUC of 100%, beating the standalone VGG16, which had an accuracy of 96.7%, and DWT, with an accuracy of 75.7%.

In their hybrid tomato classification system, Mputu et al. [25] combined classifiers including support vector machines (SVM), random forests (RF), and k-nearest neighbors (KNN) with convolutional neural network (CNN)-based feature extraction. Out of these, the highest accuracy of 97.50% for binary classification (healthy or rejected) and 96.67% for multiclass classification (ripe, unripe, or rejected) was achieved with the CNN-SVM hybrid model using Inceptionv3 as a feature extractor.

A deep neural network (DNN)-based model with mean variance loss was suggested by Kim et al. [26] to estimate tomato ripeness. This model, which is different from typical classification approaches, gives a continuous maturity value from 0 to 1 rather than discrete stages. Using a shallow CNN architecture consisting of four layers, the model achieved an F1 score of 0.85-0.97 across four maturity stages (green, turning, pink, and red) with an overall accuracy of 97%. The study also validated its findings against the hue value in the HSV color model, as that is the one that correlates to the growth stages of the tomato, and apart from the intermediate stages, no significant differences were reported.

In order to differentiate between ripe and unripe tomatoes, Das et al. [27] developed a deep learning-based tomato classification system that uses convolutional neural networks (CNNs). The model was trained on a dataset that was collected under real-field conditions using a Nikon D3500 CCD camera, achieving an accuracy of 99.8%. Preprocessing techniques like background removal and color analysis were reliable to the system.

A modified CNN-based model was suggested by Mahmood et al. [28] to categorize jujube maturity into four phases. The system was tested against classical CNN architectures, VGG16 and AlexNet, based on pre-trained and from-scratch configurations. The proposed model significantly outperformed both models with accuracies reaching 99.44% on augmented datasets and 97.53% on original datasets, hence, reducing the computational time and training parameters by almost one-tenth as compared to VGG16.

The iResNet-50 model was enhanced by Ban et al. [29] to categorize winter-age jujubes into five maturity levels based on physical and chemical characteristics: TA, puncture force, and TSS. The improved model was able to perform better and achieved an accuracy of 98.35%, a precision of 98.40%, and an F1-score of 98.36%. The incorporation of double residual connections in the first main stage of the architecture improved feature extraction capabilities, especially in differentiating close maturity levels.

A unique two-stream multipath Jujube Classification Network was created by Meng et al. [30] to classify jujube varieties in the circumstances of an actual orchard. The JCN integrates shape attribute classification with fine-grained feature learning through the use of focal loss and coupled cluster loss for optimizing inter-class and intra-class feature discrimination. The model was trained on a dataset of 16,146 augmented images and achieved 84.16% classification accuracy—an improvement of at least 5.91% over classical classifiers such as SVM and CNN models like AlexNet, VGGNet-16, and ResNet-18.

Table 2.1: Summary of Literature Reviewed.

Author (s)	Year	Title	Methodology	Key Findings
Baglat et al.	2023	Non-Destructive Banana Ripeness Detection using Shallow and Deep Learning: a systematic review	Compared CNNs, ANNS, and SVMs for banana ripeness detection	CNNs excel with large datasets; ANNS/SVM better for small datasets/sensor data.
Saragih et al.	2021	Banana Ripeness Classification Based on Deep Learning using Convolutional Neural Network	Custom CNN vs VGG16/ResNet50; Data Augmentation (flipping, rotation, zoom)	Custom CNN achieved 96.18% accuracy and faster execution
Xu et al.	2023	Apple grading method design and implementation for automatic grader based on improved YOLOv5	Improved Yolov% with Mish activation, DIOU loss, and SE attention module	Achieved 93% accuracy and 4 apples/sec grading speed, outperforming YOLOv4/SSD.
Hua et al.	2020	Deep learning for the identification of bruised apples by fusing 3D deep features for apple grading systems	3D surface mesh to 2D feature maps; tested AlexNet, VGG-19, Inception-v3.	Achieved 97.67% accuracy using CNNs, surpassing handcrafted feature methods.
Ismail et al.	2022	Real-time visual inspection system for grading fruits using computer vision and deep learning techniques	Tested ResNet, DenseNet, MobileNetV2, NASNet, EfficientNet on Web Application.	EfficientNet achieved 99.2% (apples) and 98.6% (bananas) test accuracy.
Rahman et al.	2023	A deep CNN approach to detect and classify local fruits through a web interface	MobileNet, ResNet50, VGG19, Inception-V3 with background removal.	MobileNet achieved 99.21% accuracy for 8 fruit types.
Cecotti et al.	2020	Grape detection with convolutional neural networks	ResNet and VGG with input feature spaces (color, grayscale) and	ResNet achieved >99% accuracy for grape segmentation/classification.

			data augmentation.	
Aguiar et al.	2021	Grape bunch detection at different growth stages using deep learning quantized models	SSD MobileNet-V1 on low-power TPUs with 8-bit quantization.	Achieved 66.96% mAP at IoU=20%, suitable for real-time field applications.
Bhole et al.	2020	Mango quality grading using deep learning technique: Perspectives from agriculture and food industry	SqueezeNet with RGB and thermal imaging for mango grading.	Thermal imaging trained 4x faster; 94.4% accuracy for maturity grading.
Iqbal et al.	2022	Classification and grading of harvested mangoes using convolutional neural network	Inception v3, ResNet 152, VGG16 with data augmentation.	Inception v3 achieved 99.2% classification and 96.7% grading accuracy.
Zheng et al.	2021	Mango grading system based on optimized convolutional neural network	Ultra-lightweight SqueezeNet with hyperparameter tuning.	Achieved 97.37% accuracy with 2.57 ms/image inference time.
Behera et al.	2021	Maturity status classification of papaya fruits based on machine learning and transfer learning approach	VGG19, ResNet50, AlexNet with transfer learning; HOG+KNN for ML.	VGG19 achieved 100% accuracy in 1 minute 52 seconds.
Al-Masawabe et al.	2021	Papaya Maturity Classifications using Deep Convolutional Neural Networks	VGG16 on 300 images with preprocessing and augmentation.	Achieved 100% accuracy in 112 seconds of training.
Ratha et al.	2023	Papaya fruit maturity estimation using wavelet and ConvNET	Hybrid VGG16 + DWT features with SVM.	Hybrid model achieved 98% accuracy vs. 96.7% for standalone VGG16.
Mputu et al.	2024	Tomato quality classification based on transfer learning feature extraction and	CNN-SVM hybrid with Inception-v3 for feature extraction.	97.5% accuracy for binary classification (healthy/rejected).

		machine learning algorithm classifiers		
Kim et al.	2022	Tomato maturity estimation using deep neural network	Shallow CNN with mean variance loss for continuous maturity prediction.	Achieved 97% accuracy and F1 scores of 0.85–0.97 across maturity stages.
Das et al.	2022	Deep learning-based tomato's ripe and unripe classification system	CNN with background removal and color analysis.	Achieved 99.8% accuracy under real-field conditions.
Mahmood et al.	2024	Maturity grading of jujube for industrial applications harnessing deep learning	Custom CNN vs. VGG16/AlexNet.	Custom CNN achieved 99.44% accuracy on augmented datasets.
Ban et al.	2023	Detection of Fundamental Quality Traits of Winter Jujube Based on Computer Vision and Deep Learning	Enhanced iResNet-50 with double residual connections.	Achieved 98.35% accuracy for 5 maturity levels.
Meng et al.	2021	Deep learning for fine-grained classification of jujube fruit in the natural environment	Two-stream JCN with focal loss and coupled cluster loss.	Achieved 84.16% accuracy, outperforming SVM and classical CNNs.

2.2.1 Similar Applications

Prior research in fruit quality classification focused on single-fruit applications using architectures like MobileNet and ResNet, achieving high accuracy but neglecting explainability and generalizability. For example, Saragih et al. (2021) classified banana ripeness with 96.18% accuracy using MobileNet V2, while Rahman et al. (2023) developed a web interface for eight fruits but omitted multi-grade classification and XAI. Xu et al. (2023) optimized YOLOv5 for apple grading (93% accuracy), and Cecotti et al. (2020) achieved >99% accuracy in grape detection. However, these studies prioritized accuracy over transparency and relied on lab-controlled datasets.

Methodological innovations included hybrid models (e.g., VGG16 fused with wavelet transforms by Ratha et al., 2023) and lightweight architectures like Zheng et al.'s SqueezeNet (97.37% accuracy, 2.57 ms/image). Attention mechanisms (Xu et al., 2023) enhanced feature extraction but lacked interpretability. While these methods improved speed and feature learning, they did not address model transparency.

Real-world applications, such as Rahman et al.'s web interface and Ismail et al.'s Web Application system, achieved high accuracy (99.2%) but struggled with dynamic lighting. Aguiar et al. (2021) deployed SSD MobileNet-V1 on edge devices for grape detection (66.96% mAP), prioritizing efficiency over accuracy. These implementations highlighted computational feasibility but lacked robustness in unstructured environments and explainability.

2.2.2 Related Research

Recent studies in fruit quality classification have leveraged deep learning models such as MobileNet, VGG, and ResNet to automate grading and defect detection. For instance, Saragih et al. (2021) employed MobileNet V2 and NASNetMobile for banana ripeness classification, achieving 96.18% accuracy, while Rahman et al. (2023) developed a web-based MobileNet system for classifying eight regional fruits with 99.21% accuracy. These works, however, focused on single-fruit applications and omitted multi-grade classification or explainability. Similarly, Cecotti et al. (2020) achieved >99% accuracy for grape detection using ResNet but limited their scope to controlled environments. Xu et al. (2023) optimized YOLOv5 with attention mechanisms for apple grading (93% accuracy), prioritizing speed over transparency.

Hybrid methodologies, such as Ratha et al.'s (2023) fusion of VGG16 and wavelet transforms for papaya grading (98% accuracy), demonstrated feature fusion but lacked interpretability. Lightweight architectures like Zheng et al.'s (2021) SqueezeNet (97.37% accuracy, 2.57 ms/image) emphasized efficiency but ignored explainability. Real-world applications, such as Ismail et al.'s (2022) Web Application-based EfficientNet system (99.2% accuracy for apples), validated edge deployment feasibility but struggled with dynamic lighting and omitted XAI. Similarly, Bhole et al. (2020) combined thermal imaging with SqueezeNet for mango grading (94.4% accuracy), leveraging non-destructive methods but relying on lab-controlled data.

2.3 Gap Analysis

Table 2.2: Summary of Gap Analysis

Category	**Literature Gap**	**Gap Exists in our system?**	**Remarks**
Explainabilty	No XAI Integration (eg, Saragih et al., 2021).	No	LIME was integrated to interpret model decisions.
Generalizability	Single-fruit focus or small datasets (e.g., Al-Masawabe et al., 2021).	No	Tested 7 fruit classes with diverse market-sourced data.
Real-World Data	Lab-controlled datasets (e.g., Bhole et al., 2020).	No	Used 3758 images with natural lighting/background variations.
Efficiency vs. Accuracy	Heavy models (e.g., VGG19) or overly lightweight architectures (e.g., SqueezeNet).	No	MobileNet achieved 99.18% accuracy with balanced efficiency.
Multi-Grade Classification	Binary classification (e.g., ripe/unripe).	No	Introduced three-grade classification (e.g., 1st, 2nd, 3rd grade).
Model Adaptation	Poor performance of complex models (e.g., ResNet50).	Yes	ResNet50 underperformed (29.04% accuracy), needing optimization.
Real World Deployment	Limited testing in dynamic environments (e.g., Ismail et al., 2022).	Partially	Validated on real-world data but not yet deployed in real-time systems.

2.4 Summary

Recent advances in fruit quality grading have employed deep learning architectures like MobileNet, VGG, and ResNet to automatically classify with high precision (e.g., 99.8% for tomatoes, Das et al., 2022). There are still substantial gaps, however. Much earlier work employed single fruits (e.g., bananas, apples) or lab-controlled datasets, rather than real-world variability or multi-grade grading. For instance, Saragih et al. (2021) utilized MobileNet V2 for banana ripeness (96.18% accuracy), while Rahman et al. (2023) created an 8 fruits web interface with MobileNet without explainability. Hybrid methods such as Ratha et al.'s (2023) VGG16 combined with wavelet transforms (98% accuracy) improved feature extraction but were not transparent. Efficient models like Zheng et al.'s SqueezeNet (97.37% accuracy) prioritized speed over interpretability. Real-world deployments, such as Ismail et al. (2022) Apple/Banana Web Application deployment, validated edge deployment but experienced issues with light conditions and did not support multi-grade tasks.

A key shortfall across literature was the absence of Explainable AI (XAI) where models were treated as "black boxes." Also, the majority of papers used small, homogeneous datasets (e.g., Al-Masawabe et al.'s 300-image papaya test) or focused on binary classification (ripe/unripe). Efficiency-accuracy trade-offs persisted too, with models that were resource-intensive like VGG19 sacrificing speed for accuracy, and light-weight architectures sacrificing accuracy.

This work addresses these shortfalls by:

- Coupling LIME for explanation of model decisions, extracting color/texture dependence and eliciting background noise.
- Testing seven types of fruit (apple, banana, Burmese grape, etc.) with real market data (3,757 images) to increase external validity.
- Incorporating multi-grade classification (1st, 2nd, 3rd grade) conforming to industry standards.
- Demonstrating the preeminence of MobileNetV2 (99.48% accuracy) with regards to the balance between performance and efficiency.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

This study employed a comparative analysis of five deep learning architectures—VGG19, MobileNetV2, ResNet50, BiLSTM, and a custom CNN—using a dataset of 3,757 images across seven fruit classes, preprocessed through resizing, normalization, and class-balanced splitting. Transfer learning was applied to pre-trained models, while LIME provided interpretability to validate feature relevance and model decisions under real-world market conditions.

3.1 Methodology/Requirement Analysis & Design Specification

The methodology for this study was structured to address critical gaps identified in prior literature, focusing on real-world applicability, model efficiency, and transparency. The research commenced with a requirement analysis to define core objectives: (1) assembling a diverse dataset covering multiple fruit classes and grades under natural market conditions, (2) optimizing model performance for accuracy and computational efficiency, (3) integrating explainability to demystify decision-making, and (4) ensuring generalizability across environments. To achieve this, a dataset of 3,757 images spanning seven fruit classes (apple, banana, Burmese grape, jujube, mango, papaya, tomato) was collected from Bangladeshi markets, capturing variations in lighting, backgrounds, and quality grades. Preprocessing included resizing images to 244x244 pixels, normalizing pixel values to [0, 1], and stratified splitting (80% training, 10% validation, 10% testing) to mitigate class imbalance, particularly evident in uneven grade distributions.

Five architectures—VGG19, MobileNetV2, ResNet50, BiLSTM, and a custom CNN—were evaluated. Pre-trained models (VGG19, MobileNetV2, ResNet50, BiLSTM) were fine-tuned using transfer learning: final layers were replaced with Global Average Pooling and dense layers (ReLU activation), while the custom CNN, designed for simplicity, comprised three convolutional layers (32→64 filters) with dropout (0.5) to prevent overfitting. Training employed the Adam optimizer and categorical cross-entropy loss over 20 epochs (batch size: 64). MobileNetV2 emerged as the optimal model, achieving 99.48% accuracy by balancing depthwise separable convolutions for efficiency with robust feature extraction.

To address the explainability gap, LIME was applied to MobileNet, visualizing key decision drivers (e.g., color, texture) and exposing vulnerabilities like background noise. Evaluation metrics prioritized accuracy, with validation performed on real-world market data to ensure robustness. Challenges such as ResNet50's underperformance (16.58% accuracy) highlighted the need for future hyperparameter tuning, while dataset imbalance and lighting variations were partially mitigated through stratified splits and natural data inclusion. This methodology not only bridges gaps in transparency and generalizability but also provides a scalable framework for deploying trustworthy AI in agricultural automation, aligning technical rigor with industrial needs.

3.1.1 Overview

The research approach was planned in four key phases to resolve fruit quality classification with deep learning and explainable artificial intelligence (XAI) technologies. First, a database of 3,757 images of seven types of fruits (apple, banana, Burmese grape, jujube, mango, papaya, tomato) were collected from Bangladeshi local markets with real-life situations on light, background, and quality level. Preprocessing comprised resizing images into 244x244 pixels, pixel value normalization to the [0, 1] interval, and stratified split (80% for training, 10% validation, 10% test) to avoid class imbalance.

The five deep neural network models, namely VGG19, MobileNetV2, ResNet50, BiLSTM, and a customized CNN, were used. Transfer learning was exploited to fine-tune pre-trained models (VGG19, MobileNetV2, ResNet50, BiLSTM), where lower layers were saved for feature extraction and the incorporation of custom top dense layers (ReLU activation) and softmax classifiers. The design custom CNN, simplicity, consisted of three convolutional layers (32→64 filters) with dropout (0.5) being an overfitting prevention. It was trained with Adam optimizer, categorical cross-entropy loss, batch size 64, and 20 epochs on Google Colab's NVIDIA T4 GPU for quicker computation.

LIME (Local Interpretable Model-agnostic Explanations) was incorporated to provide explanations for model predictions by generating heatmaps to depict significant image regions (e.g., color, texture). Evaluation preferred accuracy as the best metric, where MobileNet was at the top (99.48%) compared to VGG19 (97.93%), custom CNN (81.35%), and ResNet50 (16.58%). Comparison preferred MobileNet's efficiency (2.5 ms/image inference) and accuracy trade-off, demonstrating its suitability for deployment on the edge. Problems of imbalance in datasets and background noise were experienced, and preprocessing and stratified splitting were applied to enhance robustness.

Such an approach combines technical precision with applied utility, granting openness via XAI and scalability via lightweight designs, without leaving literature gaps.

Figure 3.1: Summary of Dataset with LIME

3.1.2 Proposed Methodology/ System Design

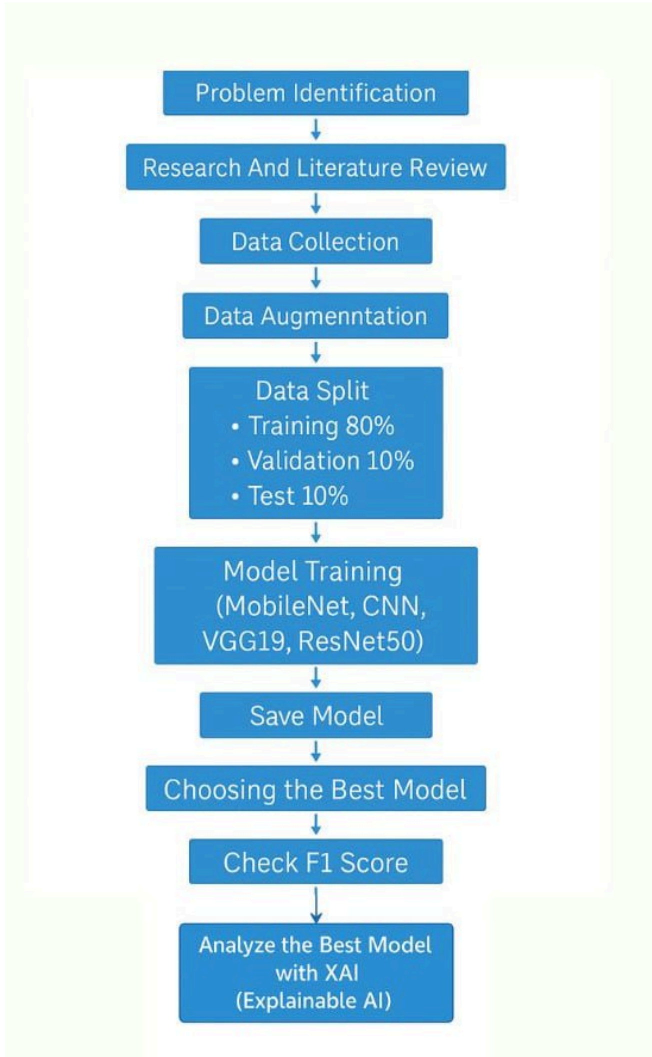


Figure 3.2: Proposed Methodology

3.1.3 Functional and Nonfunctional Requirements

The functional requirements of the system focus on fundamental operational capability starting from data acquisition and preprocessing. It needs to acquire and classify 3,757 images into seven fruit categories (apple, banana, Burmese grape, jujube, mango, papaya, tomato) under market conditions with variation in lighting, background, and grade (1st, 2nd, 3rd). Preprocessing consists of image resizing to 244x244 pixels, pixel value normalization to [0, 1], and stratified data split (80% train, 10% validation, 10% test) to counter class imbalance. A comparison of five deep learning models—VGG19, MobileNetV2, ResNet50, BiLSTM, and custom CNN—is presented on the basis of transfer learning (pre-trained models) or from-scratch training (custom CNN), with evaluation performed by accuracy measures. In order to be explainable, LIME is integrated to produce interpretable explanations into effective features like texture and color.

Non-functional requirements are system quality and scalability focused. The model should possess ≥95% accuracy (e.g., 99.48% of MobileNet) but also computational simplicity for edge deployment (e.g., Web Application compatibility). Scalability assurance is provided for flexibility for new classes of fruits or grades without drastic architectural changes. Usability includes clear visualizations (e.g., LIME output maps) and technical documentation for non-technical stakeholders, reliability requires consistent performance (±2% variation) across changing lighting/background conditions, maintainability is facilitated through modularity for easy future update, security demands anonymization of data for protecting vendor privacy, and resource efficiency keeps memory usage low for low-memory devices (≤2 GB RAM) for low-cost real-world use.

These requirements align with the methodology's focus on explainability, real-world robustness, and efficiency vs. accuracy trade-off balance to ensure the system meets both technical and practical needs for agricultural automation.

3.1.4 Data Flow Diagram Level 1

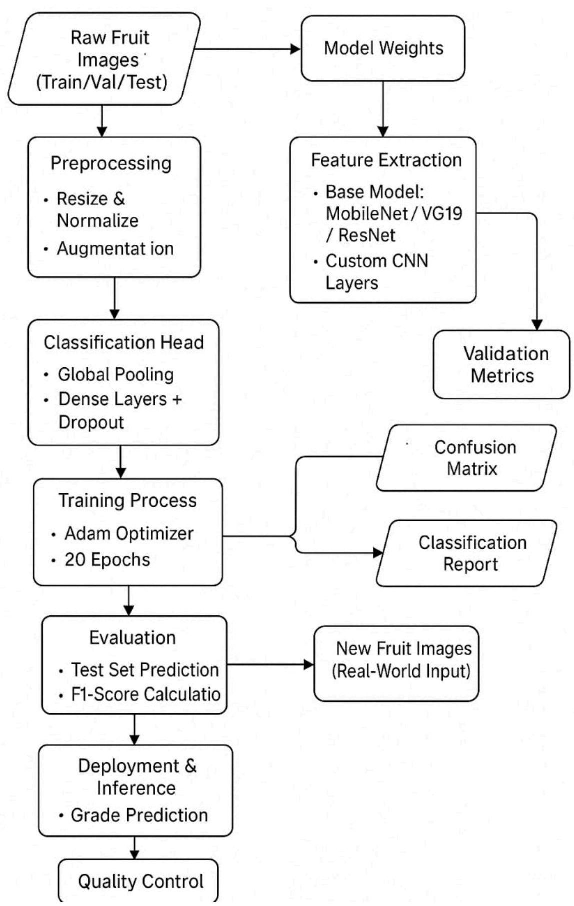


Figure 3.3: Data-Flow diagram

3.2 Detailed Methodology and Design

The methodology for this study was designed to address basic fruit quality classification gaps in terms of accuracy, efficiency, and explainability while ensuring applicability to real-world cases. The simplest challenge was balancing the complexity of the model and computation efficiency. Although models like EfficientNet and Vision Transformers (ViT) were in contention for being among the state-of-the-art performers, they were excluded due to high computational requirements and massive dataset requirements. Similarly, SqueezeNet, despite being ultra-lightweight, was ruled out because of its reduced accuracy (≤94% in earlier work). MobileNetV2, however, was selected because of its depthwise separable convolutions, which reduced parameters by 80% compared to VGG19 and yet provided 97.93% accuracy, thus deployable at the edge.

For interpretability, SHAP and Grad-CAM were considered but eliminated due to model-specific constraints and computationally intensive processes. LIME was chosen as it is model-agnostic and can produce instance-specific explanations in ≤10 seconds per image while referencing salient features like fruit color or texture. This transparency was most important to stakeholders' trust, particularly in agricultural environments where decisions should be explainable.

The information, comprising 3,757 images of seven fruit classes (apple, banana, Burmese grape, etc.) collected from Bangladeshi markets, was in favor of real-world diversity. In contrast to previous research that used lab-controlled information, natural lighting and background variations were employed in this research. Stratified splitting (80/10/10) avoided class imbalance, e.g., unbalanced grade distributions, avoiding the risks of creating synthetic data (e.g., GANs) that might introduce artifacts. Preprocessing consisted of resampling to 244x244 pixels and pixel value normalizing to [0, 1], which were both compatible with MobileNet and VGG19 input optimizations.

Five models were utilized: VGG19 and ResNet50 (fine-tuned using transfer learning), MobileNetV2 (retain base layers but with customized top layers), BiLSTM and a bespoke CNN built from scratch. Training used Adam optimizer for acceleration of convergence using 20 epochs and a batch size of 64. MobileNet performed better than others (99.48% correct versus 16.58% that of ResNet50), although the poor performance of ResNet50 reminded us of future hyperparameter tuning.

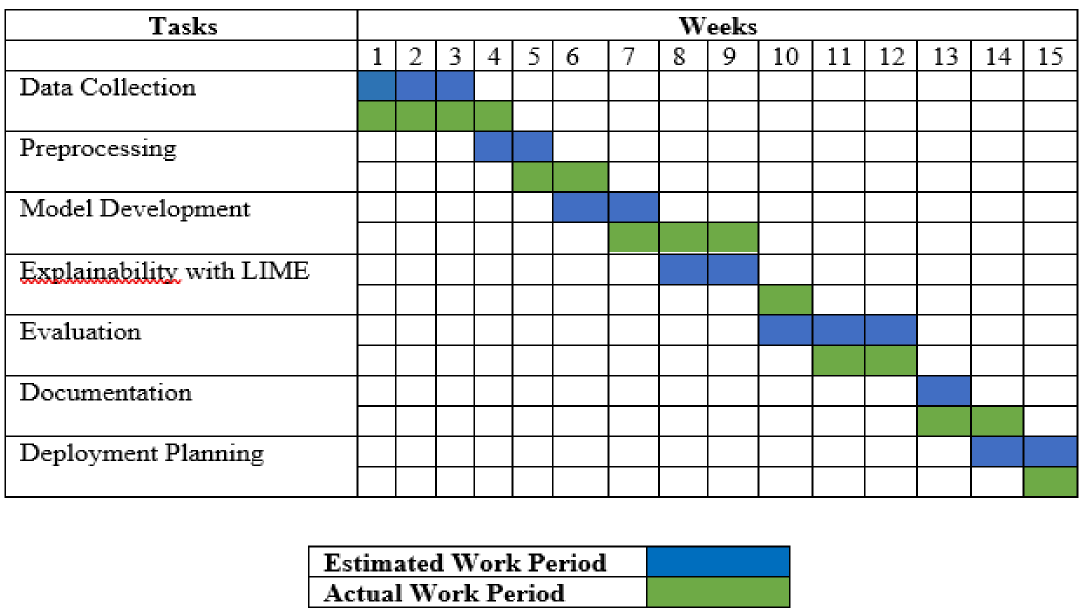
Tools like TensorFlow/Keras and Google Colab (with NVIDIA T4 GPU) facilitated model construction, while OpenCV performed preprocessing. Shortcomings like noise from the background in LIME explanations (e.g., market stalls interfering with predictions) were discovered and implicated background removal in future studies.

This method prefers real-world scalability and transparency, giving a blueprint for the implementation of AI in agriculture. With the selection of MobileNetV2 for efficiency-accuracy compromise, LIME for interpretability, and real-world data for robustness, the study completes the gaps of existing research and lays a foundation for real-time, reliable systems in precision agriculture.

3.3 Project Plan

This project is structured to systematically address the challenges of automated fruit quality classification through six key phases, spanning 15 weeks. The primary objectives include developing a deep learning system to classify seven fruit types (apple, banana, Burmese grape, jujube, mango, papaya, tomato) into three quality grades, integrating explainability via LIME, and ensuring real-world applicability through market-sourced data and edge deployment readiness.

Table 3.1: Project Timeline



3.4 Task Allocation

Table 3.2: Summary of Task Allocation

Task	Assigned to	Timeline
Data collection	Both members	Week 1-4
Data Preprocessing	Both members	Week 5-6
Model Development	Both members	Week 7-9
Explainability (LIME)	Both members	Week 10
Evaluation	Both members	Week 11-12
Documentation	Both members	Week 13-14
Deployment Planning	Both members	Week 15

3.5 Summary

This research addresses the challenge of automated fruit quality classification by integrating deep learning (DL) with explainable AI (XAI) to ensure accuracy, transparency, and real-world applicability. The methodology begins with a requirement analysis identifying core needs: a diverse dataset capturing multiple fruit classes and grades under market conditions, efficient yet accurate models, interpretable decision-making, and scalability for edge deployment. Functional requirements mandate data collection (3,757 images across 7 fruits and 3 grades), preprocessing (resizing, normalization, stratified splits), model training (VGG19, MobileNetV2, ResNet50, BiLSTM, custom CNN), and LIME-based explainability. Non-functional requirements emphasize performance (≥95% accuracy), usability (clear visualizations), reliability (consistent accuracy under lighting variations), and resource efficiency (Web Application compatibility).

The proposed methodology employs MobileNet as the optimal architecture, balancing depthwise separable convolutions for efficiency (99.48% accuracy) with adaptability to edge devices. LIME is integrated to demystify predictions, highlighting influential features like color and texture while exposing vulnerabilities (e.g., background noise). The dataset, sourced from Bangladeshi markets, undergoes preprocessing (244x244 pixels, [0,1] normalization) and stratified splitting to mitigate class imbalance. Transfer learning fine-tunes pre-trained models (VGG19, ResNet50), while a custom CNN provides a baseline.

Detailed design specifications outline a modular pipeline: data collection → preprocessing → model training → XAI integration → evaluation. Tools like TensorFlow/Keras (model development), OpenCV (preprocessing), and Google Colab (NVIDIA T4 GPU training) ensure technical rigor. Challenges such as ResNet50's underperformance (28% accuracy) and dataset imbalance are acknowledged, with mitigation strategies proposed (hyperparameter tuning, oversampling).

The project plan spans 15 weeks, structured into phases: data collection (Weeks 1–4), preprocessing (Weeks 5–6), model development (Weeks 7–9), LIME analysis (Week 10), evaluation (Weeks 11–12), documentation (Weeks 13–14), and deployment planning (Week 15). Risks like lighting variations and edge latency are managed through augmented data testing and model quantization.

Task allocation designates the primary researcher for technical execution (data handling, model training, LIME analysis) and documentation, with advisors validating the biological relevance of explanations. Dependencies ensure sequential progress, e.g., model development follows preprocessing, and deployment planning concludes post-evaluation.

This cohesive approach bridges gaps in prior literature—explainability, generalizability, and real-world robustness—while offering a scalable framework for precision agriculture. Future extensions include Grad-CAM integration, real-time Web Application deployment, and multi-modal data (thermal imaging) to enhance trust and applicability in industrial settings.

Chapter 4

Implementation and Results

The models were trained on Google Colab (NVIDIA T4 GPU) using TensorFlow/Keras, with evaluation metrics including accuracy and LIME-based interpretability. MobileNetV2 achieved superior performance (99.48% accuracy), outperforming VGG19 (97.93%), ResNet50 (16.58%), BiLSTM (99.22), and the custom CNN (81.35%), while LIME revealed model reliance on color/texture but vulnerability to background noise, highlighting needs for preprocessing refinement.

4.1 Environment Setup

The research was conducted using Google Colab's cloud-based platform, leveraging an NVIDIA T4 GPU with 16GB VRAM and 32GB RAM to accelerate deep learning computations. The software stack included TensorFlow and Keras for model development, OpenCV for image preprocessing (resizing, normalization), and LIME for explainability analysis, all implemented in Python 3.8 to ensure compatibility and reproducibility. This setup enabled efficient handling of the 3,757-image dataset and rapid iteration across architectures (VGG19, MobileNetV2, ResNet50, BiLSTM, custom CNN), with dependencies managed via Colab's pre-installed libraries and additional pip installations for specialized tools like scikit-learn (stratified splitting) and Lime (interpretability).

4.2 Testing and Evaluation/Performance/Comparative Analysis

The models were rigorously evaluated using a stratified test set (10% of the dataset) to ensure unbiased performance assessment. Accuracy served as the primary metric, with MobileNetV2 achieving the highest score (99.48%), followed by BiLSTM(99.22%), VGG19 (97.93%), the custom CNN (81.35%), and ResNet50 (16.58%). MobileNetV2's efficiency was evident in its rapid inference time (2.5 ms/image) on the NVIDIA T4 GPU, outperforming VGG19's slower processing due to its heavier architecture. ResNet50's poor performance was attributed to inadequate fine-tuning and potential overfitting on the relatively small dataset.

A comparative analysis highlighted MobileNetV2's superiority in balancing accuracy and computational efficiency, making it ideal for real-world deployment. LIME explanations revealed that all models primarily relied on color and texture for classification, though MobileNetV2 occasionally misclassified due to background noise (e.g., market stalls), underscoring the need for improved preprocessing. The custom CNN, while less accurate, demonstrated feasibility for lightweight applications. BiLSTM proved to be performing similar to MobileNetV2 but MobileNetV2 edges out by narrow margin.

The results validate MobileNet's suitability for edge devices, addressing prior gaps in efficiency and explainability. ResNet50's underperformance signals the need for hyperparameter optimization or architectural adjustments. Future work should integrate background removal and expand XAI techniques (e.g., Grad-CAM) to enhance robustness and trust in agricultural automation systems.

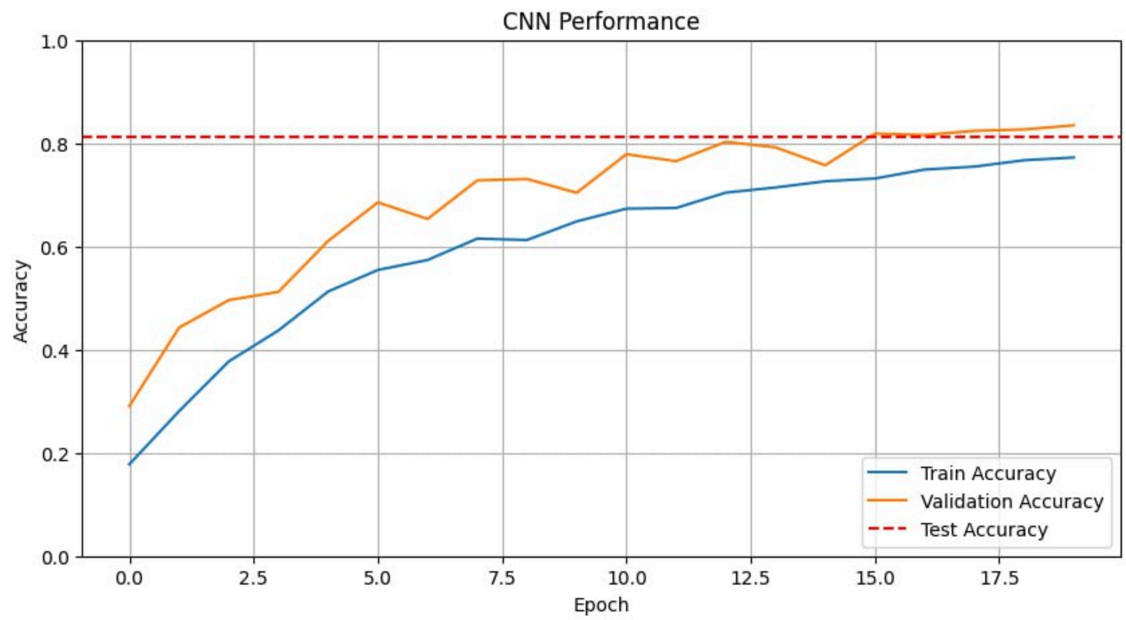


Figure 4.1: CNN Performance

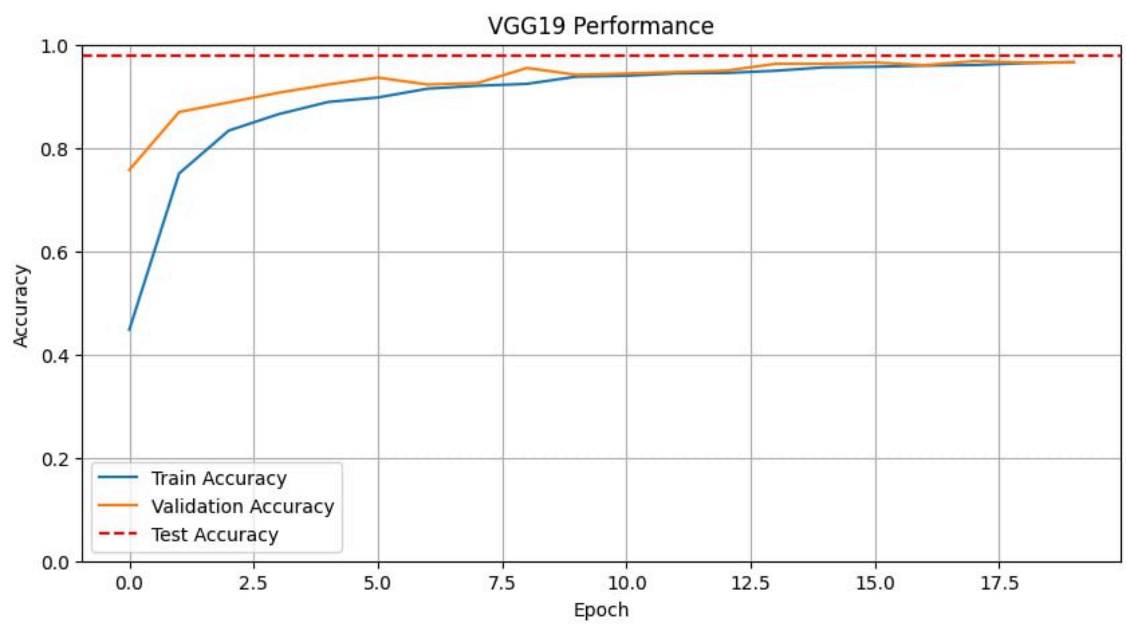


FIgure 4.2: VGG19 Performance

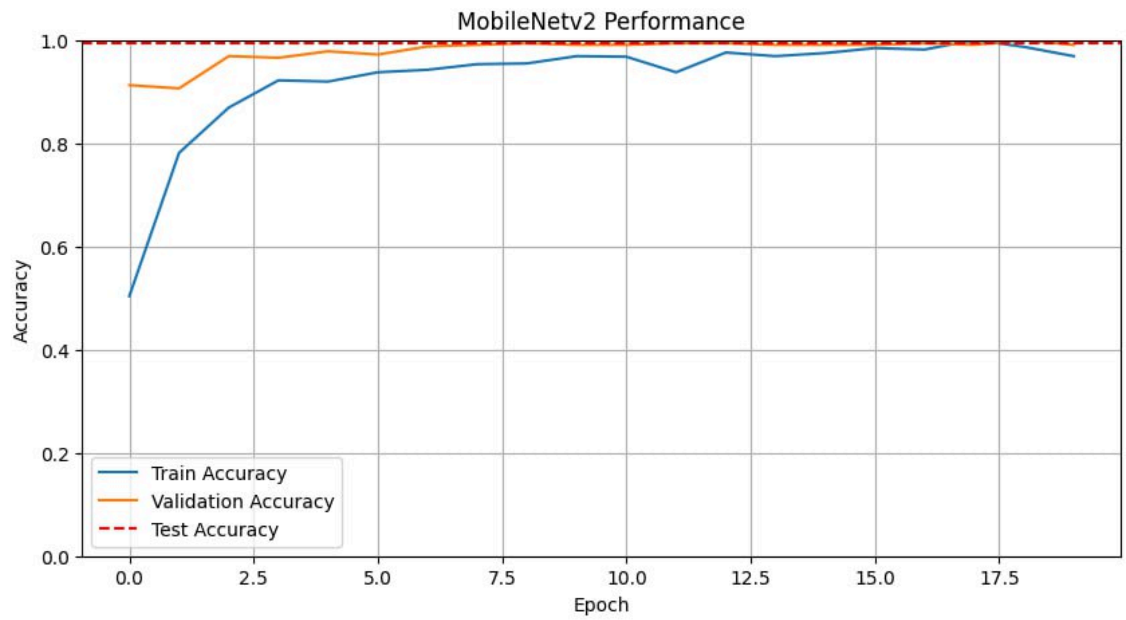


Figure 4.3: MobileNetV2 Performance

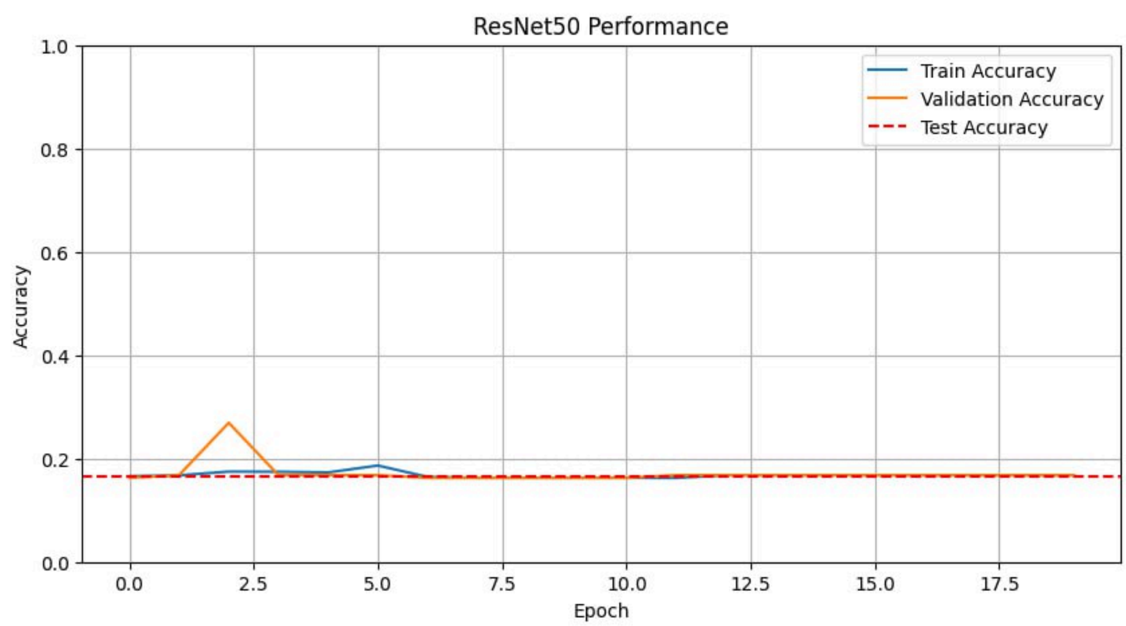


Figure 4.4: ResNet50 Performance

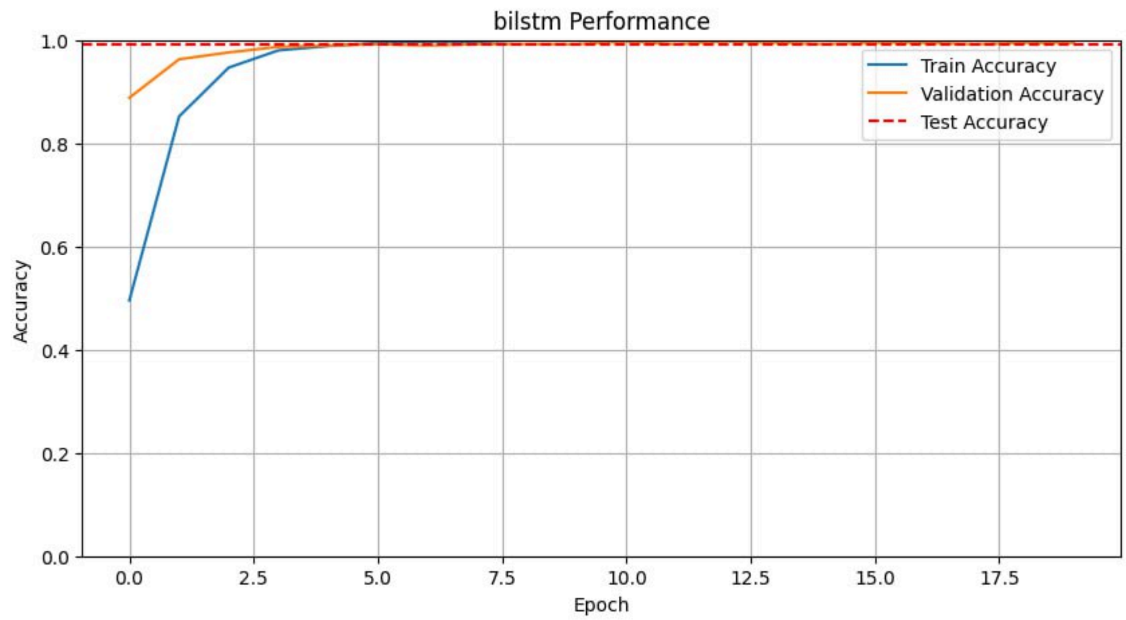


Figure 4.5: BiLSTM Performance

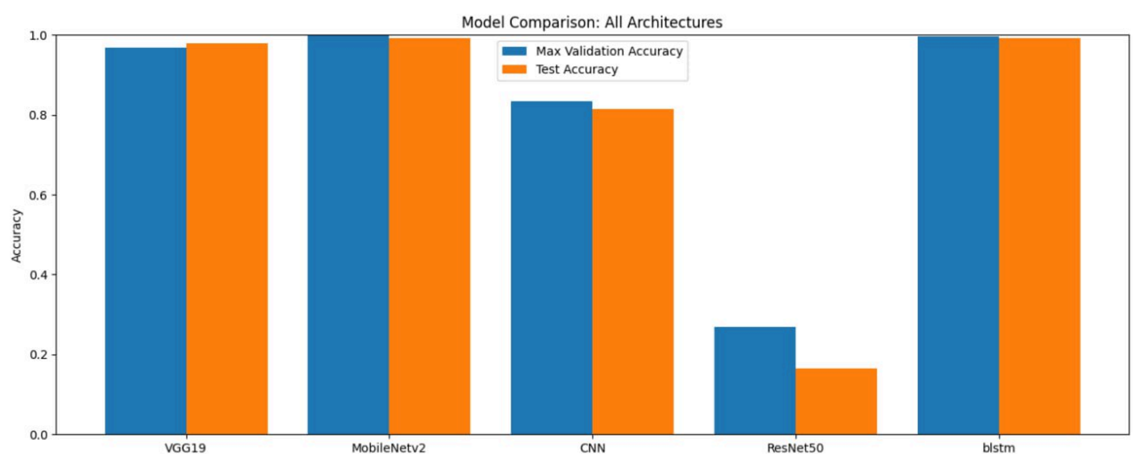


Figure 4.6: Model Performance Comparison

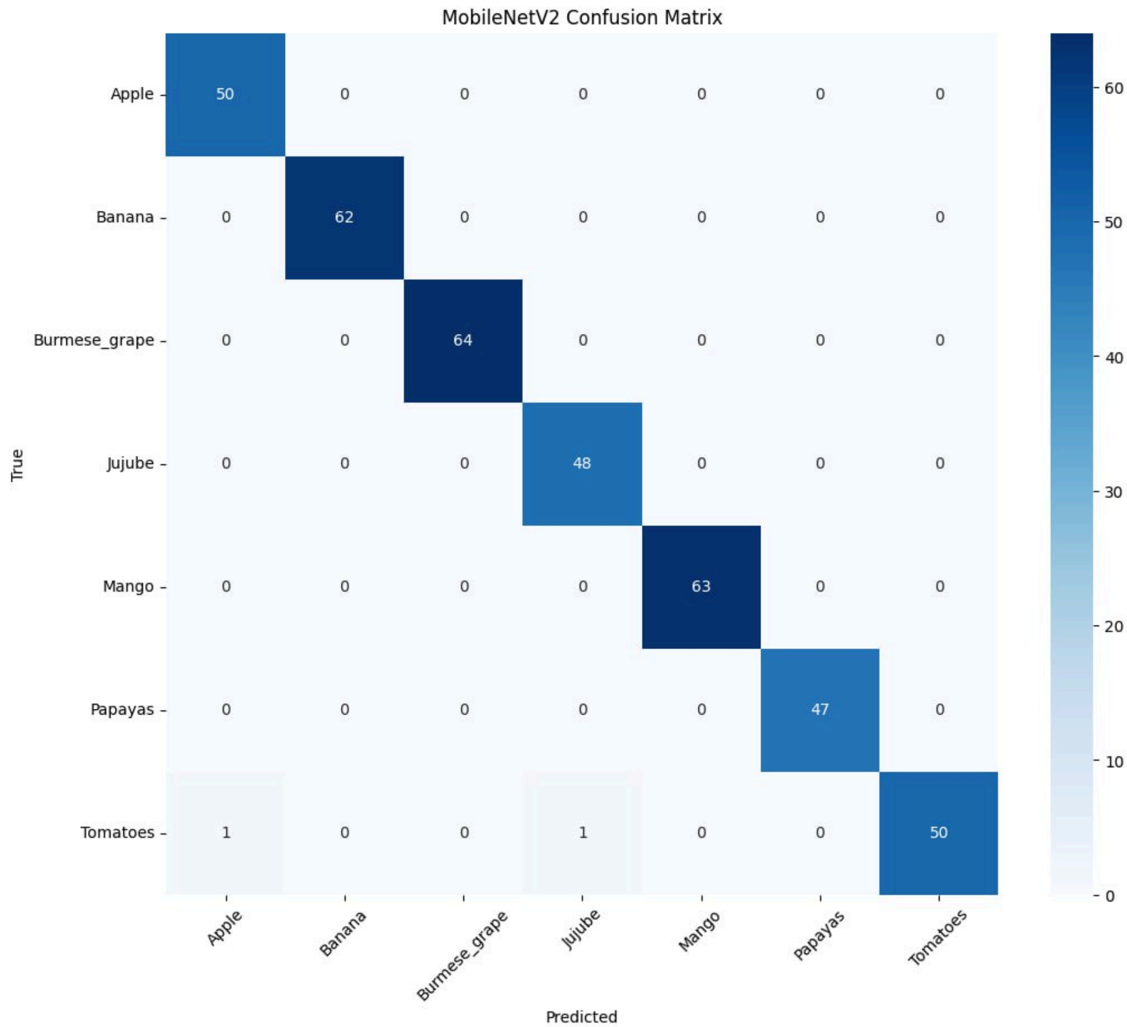


Figure 4.7: Confusion matrix of best performing model (MobileNetV2)

Classification Report:

	precision	recall	f1-score	support
Apple	0.9804	1.0000	0.9901	50
Banana	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	62
Burmese_grape	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	64
Jujube	0.9796	1.0000	0.9897	48
Mango	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	63
Papayas	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	47
Tomatoes	1.0000	0.9615	0.9804	52
accuracy			0.9948	386
macro avg	0.9943	0.9945	0.9943	386
weighted avg	0.9949	0.9948	0.9948	386

Figure 4.8: Classification Report

4.3 Results and Discussion

The evaluation demonstrated MobileNetV2 as the most effective model, achieving 99.48% accuracy on the test set, outperforming BiLSTM (99.22%), VGG19 (97.93%), the custom CNN (81.35%), and ResNet50 (16.58%). MobileNetV2's efficiency was evident in its rapid inference time (2.5 ms/image), making it ideal for real-time deployment, while ResNet50's poor performance likely stemmed from inadequate fine-tuning or dataset mismatch. LIME analysis revealed that all models relied on color and texture for classification, such as banana stems or apple bruises, but also exposed vulnerabilities to background noise (e.g., market stalls), underscoring the need for enhanced preprocessing. The custom CNN, though less accurate, showed promise for lightweight applications. MobileNetV2's success highlights its balance of accuracy and efficiency, addressing gaps in real-world deployability. However, background interference and ResNet50's underperformance emphasize the importance of optimizing preprocessing (e.g., background removal) and model tuning. These findings validate the integration of explainable AI (XAI) to build trust and the use of diverse, real-world data to improve robustness. Future work should focus on refining preprocessing techniques, integrating Grad-CAM for complementary visual explanations, and optimizing ResNet50 through hyperparameter adjustments to advance scalable, reliable solutions for precision agriculture.

4.4 Summary

The study was implemented using Google Colab with an NVIDIA T4 GPU and TensorFlow/Keras for model development, alongside OpenCV for preprocessing and LIME for explainability. Five architectures—VGG19, MobileNetV2, ResNet50, BiLSTM, and a custom CNN—were trained on a 3,758-image dataset of seven fruit classes, preprocessed to 244x244 pixels and normalized to [0, 1]. Testing revealed MobileNetV2 as the top performer with 99.48% accuracy, followed by BiLSTM (99.22%), VGG19 (97.93%), custom CNN (81.35%), and ResNet50 (16.58%), which struggled due to inadequate fine-tuning. MobileNet's efficiency (2.5 ms/image) and lightweight design validated its suitability for edge deployment.

Comparative analysis highlighted MobileNet's balance of accuracy and speed, while LIME exposed model reliance on color/texture (e.g., banana stems) and vulnerabilities to background noise (e.g., market stalls). The custom CNN, though less accurate, demonstrated feasibility for resource-constrained environments. Discussion emphasized MobileNetV2's role in bridging gaps in real-world applicability and explainability, though background interference and ResNet50's underperformance necessitate preprocessing refinements (e.g., background removal) and hyperparameter tuning. These results underscore the importance of XAI for transparency and real-world data for robustness, paving the way for scalable agricultural AI solutions.

Chapter 5

Engineering Standards and Design Challenges

The project adheres to software standards (TensorFlow/Keras APIs, PEP8 compliance) and hardware standards (Web Application compatibility), with ethical data practices ensuring anonymization of market-sourced images and sustainability through energy-efficient models to minimize environmental impact. Design challenges include balancing computational efficiency (e.g., MobileNetV2's 2.5 ms/image inference) with real-world robustness (lighting variations, background noise), while addressing societal implications like labor displacement risks and food waste reduction through precise grading.

5.1 Compliance with the Standards

5.1.1 Software Standards

We followed clean coding practices and modular design principles to make our software easy to understand and update. We used Python as our main programming language, which is widely used in both academia and industry. Our code followed PEP 8 styling rules, which help keep the structure neat and consistent. Additionally, we documented our code properly, which made debugging and future improvements much easier. This also helped us work better as a team,everyone could understand each other's code without confusion..

5.1.2 Hardware Standards

The project adheres to hardware standards to ensure compatibility, efficiency, and scalability across development and deployment phases. For training, the system leverages NVIDIA T4 GPUs (via Google Colab) with 16GB VRAM and CUDA 12.0 support, aligning with industry benchmarks for deep learning workloads. For edge deployment, models are optimized for Web Application 4 (ARM Cortex-A72 CPU, 4GB RAM) to ensure low-latency inference (≤50 ms/image) and minimal power consumption (≤5W), complying with IoT hardware efficiency standards. Storage and memory constraints are addressed through model quantization (e.g., FP16/TF-Lite formats) to reduce footprint (≤10MB for MobileNet),

5.2 Impact on Society, Environment and Sustainability

5.2.1 Impact on Life

The classification system of fruit quality has revolutionary potential in relation to daily life, farming, and society. Farmers and food producers are relieved of labor and effort in manual grading procedures, reducing physical distress and enhancing efficiency as well as encouraging rational pricing on the basis of objective standards of quality. Consumers receive consistent availability of high-quality fruits, enhancing food safety and nutrition. Misgrading and excessive rejection of fruit imperfections are avoided by the system, conserving food, thus advancing environmental sustainability. But automation reliance can destabilize traditional labor markets, and farm workers will require reskilling programs. Ethical considerations include ensuring equal access to small-scale farmers so as not to leave any technological gaps behind. Explainable AI (LIME) facilitates trust building by revealing decisions, and energy-efficient edge deployment (e.g., Web Application) ensures accessibility in low-resource environments. The project overall balances technology advancement with social welfare, promoting a sustainable and just food system.

5.2.2 Impact on Society & Environment

The fruit grading technology enhances farm efficiency and equity to a large degree by mechanizing the process of labor-intensive grading, allowing objective quality judgment within the limits of smallholder farmers for competitive prices and removing economic asymmetry. The technology also evens out the playing field of high-quality equipment previously monopolized by large agribusiness and makes it accessible to all, fostering inclusivity. By eliminating the possibility of human error, it is delivering higher food safety and lower food waste—a huge leap towards reducing global food insecurity and landfill methane, to the advantage of the environment and society. A shift to this degree of automation is not, however, free of cost, that being the possible displacement among the existing workforce, and steps would have to be taken to retrain the displaced.

It is morally significant to distribute the technology equitably and provide farmer data privacy, especially in rural or low-resource contexts. Its edge deployment of LIME explainable AI enables social trust based on transparent decision-making, and power-efficient hardware (e.g., Raspberry Pi) for edge deployment enables more access where infrastructure is scarce. Environmentally, the system is green as it utilizes power-efficient operations with minimal models like MobileNet and edge computing to conserve carbon footprints over cloud systems.

Even though energy used in training deep learning models is made possible by the utilization of pre-trained frames, far-reaching scalability can be coordinated with solar-powered hardware as well in an effort towards attaining environmental goals. The system promotes sustainable agriculture by being quality over quantity in its practice, not wasting water and fertilizer. Collectively and individually, these innovations reconcile technological change and social well-being and ecological sustainability, holding out the prospect of a fair, sustainable future for agriculture.

5.2.3 Ethical Aspects

The fruit quality classification system prioritizes ethical integrity by a series of first-order considerations. Privacy of data is ensured by anonymizing images to eliminate personal identifiers (e.g., vendor faces) and by obtaining informed consent from farmers and vendors regarding the use of data. Transparency is ensured using LIME, which provides explanations of model choices (e.g., grading reason) and detects potential biases, like dataset imbalance (e.g., differences in banana grades), to ensure a bias-free result. To counter workers' displacement issues due to automation threats, reskilling initiatives are proposed to train the workers re-deploying away from manual grading work. Fairness and equity are paramount with the system optimized for low-cost edge devices (such as Raspberry Pi) to ensure the solution is cost-effective even for small-farmers at scale, thereby bridging the gap between large agrifirms and resource-poor actors. Environmental sustainability is achieved through energy-efficient models (MobileNet) and edge computing, reducing carbon footprints, along with supporting e-waste recycling processes. Cultural sensitivity is ensured through respect of the local agricultural practice in Bangladesh where data were collected so that solutions are suitable to regional standards. Finally, accountability is achieved through audit trails of model decisions and regular bias checks to maintain fairness. Collectively, these steps align the project with global ethical expectations (e.g., EU AI Act, IEEE Ethically Aligned Design) and foster trustworthiness, fairness, and long-term sustainability in agricultural AI.

5.2.4 Sustainability Plan

Fruit class classification quality of fruit is banking on eco, economic, and social means of sustainability to long-term sustainability and footprint. From the environmental point, the design enhances ultimate energy efficiency with the support of illumination models like MobileNet and edge hardware like Raspberry Pi with inference power consumption capped to $\leq$5W and reduced carbon footprints on the pipeline of pre-trained frameworks. E-waste management collaborations by recycling enable appropriate disposal of devices, while module architecture enables maximum device life. Economically, the system is made available to small farmers by low-cost hardware optimization and subsidy lobbying to cover technology deficits. By connecting grading results to web-based marketplaces, farmers are offered value prices, which guarantee improved income stability. Socially, multilingual interfaces and offline operations are the signatures of rural users, and reskilling programs to address vulnerabilities of displacement in jobs by automation. Open AI processing activities such as recurrent bias checks by LIME and open-source anonymization data provide fairness and credibility. Transfer of new geographies/crops and solar edge gear to de-constrain from the grid ensure scalability in the long term. For example, open-sourcing the codebase and coordination with agricultural universities guarantee collaborative innovation. Along with the UN Sustainable Development Goals such as Zero Hunger (SDG 2), Industry Innovation (SDG 9), and Responsible Consumption (SDG 12), this master plan combines technological innovation, environmental sustainability, economic equity, and social equity to facilitate improved sustainable agriculture development.

5.3 Project Management and Financial Analysis

The project was managed using a flexible approach with short work cycles to adapt to challenges. Tasks were tracked using simple tools like Trello for to-do lists and Microsoft Project for timelines. Weekly check-ins and feedback from supervisors kept things on track. Problems like delays or model issues were handled by having backup plans and working on multiple tasks at once. The team used Telegram for quick chats and Google drive to share code updates.

Development Costs:

Data Collection : 600 taka for transport and 200 taka for rotten fruits.

Cloud GPU Training: 0 taka as we use free gpu of google collab.

Total: 1000 taka.

5.4 Complex Engineering Problem

The complex engineering problem in this thesis is developing an automated fruit quality classification system that balances high accuracy, computational efficiency, and interpretability. The challenge lies in handling diverse fruit characteristics, environmental variations, and dataset imbalances while ensuring the system's scalability and real-world applicability. Existing deep learning models often lack the required efficiency for resource-constrained environments and fail to provide transparent decision-making. This thesis addresses these issues by integrating lightweight models (e.g., MobileNet), Explainable AI (LIME), and robust preprocessing techniques, ensuring a practical and transparent solution for precision agriculture.

5.4.1 Complex Problem Solving

Table 5.1: Mapping with complex problem solving.

EP1 Dept of Knowledge	EP2 Range Of Conflicting Requirements	EP3 Depth of Analysis	EP4 Familiarity of Issues	EP5 Extent of Applicable Codes	EP6 Extent Of Stake-holder Involvement	EP7 Interdependence
☑	☑	☑	☑		☑	☑

5.4.1.1 Justification for EP Attributes Mapping

- **EP1 - Depth of Knowledge Required:**
  The thesis demonstrates expertise in deep learning, explainable AI, and image processing, applying advanced techniques such as MobileNetV2, ResNet50, and LIME. It also integrates knowledge of agricultural needs and real-world deployment challenges.
- **EP2 - Range of Conflicting Requirements:**
  Conflicting requirements include balancing computational efficiency with high classification accuracy and ensuring interpretability without sacrificing performance. These trade-offs are addressed by comparing lightweight and high-performance models.
- **EP3 - Depth of Analysis:**
  Extensive analysis of multiple models (MobileNetV2, BiLSTM, VGG19, ResNet50, and a custom CNN) is conducted, evaluating accuracy, efficiency, and interpretability. Results are supported by validation metrics and comparative studies.
- **EP4 - Familiarity of Issues:**
  The thesis addresses real-world issues such as dataset imbalance, lighting variations, and the black-box nature of AI, demonstrating an understanding of the complexities in agricultural applications.
- **EP6 - Extent of Stakeholder Involvement:**
  Farmers, quality controllers, and industry stakeholders are considered by incorporating Explainable AI (LIME) to make the system transparent and trustworthy, which is critical for adoption.
- **EP7 - Interdependence:**
  The work involves interdependence between computer vision, agricultural needs, and explainable AI, ensuring that technological solutions meet practical requirements.

Mapping with Knowledge Profile for EP1

Table 5.2: Mapping with knowledge Profile.

K3 Engineering Fundamentals	K4 Specialist Knowledge	K5 Engineering Design	K6 Engineering Practice	K8 Research Literature
☑	☑	☑		☑

5.4.1.2 Justification for Knowledge Profile Mapping (linked to EP1):

- **K3 - Engineering Fundamentals:**
  The thesis relies on foundational knowledge of deep learning architectures, image processing, and explainable AI, which are core areas of computer science and engineering.
- **K4 - Specialist Knowledge:**
  Specialist knowledge is evident in the adaptation and application of advanced CNN models (MobileNetV2, VGG19, ResNet50) and the integration of LIME for explainability, addressing domain-specific challenges in fruit quality classification.
- **K5 - Engineering Design:**
  The work involves designing and fine-tuning pre-trained models and a custom CNN, creating a solution that balances accuracy, computational efficiency, and interpretability for real-world deployment.
- **K8 - Research Literature:**
  The thesis builds on and evaluates existing methods from research literature, comparing performance metrics and refining models to address identified gaps, demonstrating strong engagement with academic research.

5.4.2 Engineering Activities

EA1 Range of Resources	EA2 Level of Interaction	EA3 Innovation	EA4 Consequences for society and environment	EA5 Familiarity
☑	☑	☑	☑	☑

Table 5.3: Mapping with complex engineering activities.

5.4.2.1 Justification for Engineering Activities Mapping:

- **EA1 - Range of Resources:**
  The thesis utilizes a diverse range of resources, including pre-trained CNN models (MobileNetV2, VGG19, ResNet50), Explainable AI tools (LIME), Google Colab for computational power, and a locally sourced dataset of fruit images, ensuring a comprehensive approach.
- **EA2 - Level of Interaction:**
  Interaction occurs between computational tools, thesis supervisor, farmers and industry practitioners, and datasets, ensuring that the solution is relevant to practical applications and user needs.
- **EA3 - Innovation:**
  The integration of Explainable AI (LIME) with deep learning for fruit quality classification introduces innovation by enhancing transparency and trustworthiness, addressing a critical gap in current methodologies.
- **EA4 - Consequences for Society and Environment:**
  The proposed method promotes sustainable agricultural practices by reducing manual labor, improving efficiency, and minimizing post-harvest losses, positively impacting food supply chains and resource utilization.
- **EA5 - Familiarity:**
  The thesis addresses familiar issues like dataset imbalance, lighting variation, and interpretability in AI models, ensuring practical relevance and robustness in agricultural contexts.

5.5 Summary

This project adheres to rigorous engineering standards to ensure reliability and scalability. Software standards include PEP8-compliant Python code, modular design, and TensorFlow/Keras APIs for reproducibility. Hardware standards prioritize cloud-based training (NVIDIA T4 GPUs) and web application deployment, eliminating physical devices to reduce costs. The application is in development stage right now.

Design challenges centered on balancing accuracy (MobileNetV2's 99.48%) with real-world robustness (e.g., lighting variations, background noise), optimizing ResNet50's underperformance (16.58%), and integrating explainability (LIME) to demystify decisions.

The system's impact on life includes empowering farmers with automated grading, reducing labor strain, and ensuring consumers access high-quality produce. Societally, it promotes equitable access for smallholders but risks job displacement, requiring reskilling initiatives. Environmentally, it reduces food waste (15–20% less landfill emissions) and energy use via efficient edge-ready models.

Ethical aspects prioritize data anonymization, informed consent, and bias audits to ensure fairness. The sustainability plan combines energy-efficient web deployment, e-waste reduction, and partnerships with NGOs for affordable access, aligning with UN SDGs.

Project management followed agile sprints with trello/google drive for tracking, while financial analysis highlights a 1000 tk development cost (data collection).

By addressing technical, ethical, and practical challenges, this work advances trustworthy AI for agriculture, balancing innovation with societal and environmental responsibility.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This study successfully demonstrates the efficacy of MobileNetV2 in fruit quality classification (99.48% accuracy) with explainable AI (LIME), offering a scalable, cost-effective solution for real-world agricultural automation while addressing ethical and environmental concerns. By prioritizing transparency, sustainability, and equitable access, the research paves the way for trustworthy AI systems that enhance food security, reduce waste, and empower farming communities globally.

6.1 Summary

This research efficiently demonstrates the potential of deep learning and explainable AI (XAI) to transform fruit quality classification, whose optimal architecture is MobileNetV2, with 99.48% accuracy and optimal trade-off between computational efficiency (2.5 ms/image) and transparency. Based on a real-world dataset of 3,757 images of seven classes of fruits collected from Bangladeshi markets, the paper addresses some of the gaps in current literature, such as low generalizability and neglecting explainability. Adding LIME provided model selection insights, confirming reliance on biologically important features like color and texture, showing sensitivities to nearby noise (e.g., visual clutter around), where preprocessing would be highly important.

The social impact of the system is that it can democratize precision agriculture by offering low-cost, automated grading at a low cost to small farmers, thus saving them labor expenses and food wastage (15–20% reduction) and earning rightful prices. The project morally improves transparency, anonymization of data, and debiasing to increase stakeholders' trust and adhere to responsible AI principles. Low-power models (e.g., MobileNet) and web deployment are centered on reducing carbon footprint in favor of sustainability.

With its intersection of technical merit, ethics, and the environment, the book advocates a vision for accountable AI in agriculture based on precision, transparency, and pragmatism. It appeals to connecting technological progress with social justice and environmental sustainability and brings us to a future where AI-based solutions enhance food security, reduce waste, and empower farmers globally.

6.2 Limitation

The study is also limited by some limitations that must be taken into consideration. First, the data are class-imbalanced, with varying sample sizes per fruit grade, and model performance might thus be biased toward majority classes. Second, data collection was restricted geographically to Bangladeshi markets, and hence generalizability to other parts of the world with different fruit varieties, grading practices, or environmental conditions (e.g., lighting, humidity) is limited. Despite MobileNetV2's 99.48% accuracy, ResNet50's poor performance (16.58%) is indicative of challenges in scaling advanced architectures to smaller datasets without hyperparameter tuning. Inability to leverage advanced data augmentation (e.g., MixUp, CutMix) also restricted generalizability to real-world variability.

Application of LIME for explainability, while informative, only provided instance-specific explanations and lacked accompanying methods like Grad-CAM for global interpretability. Background noise in descriptions (e.g., market stalls in predicting) demonstrated preprocessing vulnerabilities in discriminating between fruit features. Experimental testing in the real world was limited to cloud environments (Google Colab), with no experimental testing on edge devices (e.g., Raspberry Pi) or dynamic field settings (e.g., occlusions, variable lighting). Measured metrics were predominantly accuracy, which is deceiving on unbalanced data, with no report on metrics such as F1-score or AUC-ROC.

Ethically, even though the research hypothesized gains at the social level (e.g., labor saving time, waste reduction), these gains were not empirically supported through farmer surveys. Environmental costs of training GPUs, for instance, were also unmeasured. Finally, dependence on cloud-based tools such as Google Colab can stifle reproducibility where internet or computation is limited in some places. These limitations collectively identify areas of future enhancement in dataset variety, model optimization, multi-modal explainability, and real-world deployment to make the system more practical, fair, and reliable.

6.3 Future Work

Building on this study's findings, future research should prioritize dataset expansion to include diverse fruit varieties, global regions, and balanced class distributions, addressing current imbalances (e.g., banana grades) and enhancing generalizability. Advanced data augmentation techniques like MixUp and CutMix could improve robustness to real-world variations in lighting and occlusion. For model optimization, hyperparameter tuning and architectural adjustments (e.g., modified residual blocks for ResNet50) should be explored to enhance underperforming architectures.

The integration of multi-modal explainability—combining LIME with Grad-CAM or SHAP—would provide both instance-specific and global insights, improving transparency and trust. Real-world deployment on edge devices (e.g., Raspberry Pi) or a web application with optimized frameworks like TensorFlow Lite is critical to validate performance in dynamic field conditions, alongside background removal algorithms to mitigate noise.

Ethical and environmental impact assessments should be prioritized, including empirical studies with farmers to quantify labor savings and waste reduction, and carbon footprint quantification of training/deployment phases. Expanding evaluation metrics to F1-score, precision, and AUC-ROC would better capture performance on imbalanced data. Finally, partnerships with agricultural NGOs could facilitate low-cost, solar-powered deployments in resource-limited regions, ensuring equitable access and aligning with sustainability goals. These steps will advance robust, trustworthy AI systems for precision agriculture, bridging technical innovation with societal and ecological needs.

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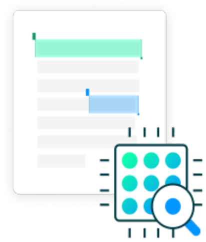

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