INDIAN JOURNAL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

OPEN ACCESS

**Received:** 21/04/2025

**Accepted:** 23/06/2025

**Published:** 12/07/2025

**Citation:** Lakshmi Devi S, Vinoth A (2025) Real-Time Driver Fatigue Detection and Classification Using YOLOv8-FD: A Precision-Driven Approach for Enhanced Road Safety. Indian Journal of Science and Technology 18(26): 2111-2123. https://doi.org/10.17485/IJST/v18i26.732

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**Funding:** None

**Competing Interests:** None



Published By Indian Society for Education and Environment (iSee)

**ISSN**
Print: 0974-6846
Electronic: 0974-5645

# Real-Time Driver Fatigue Detection and Classification Using YOLOv8-FD: A Precision-Driven Approach for Enhanced Road Safety

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## Abstract

**Objective:** The present research proposes to develop a dependable, real-time driver fatigue detection system by integrating facial feature evaluation (eye-blinking, head nodding, pupil size, and yawning) with motion displacement analysis via the Improved Lucas-Kanade Optical Flow. The technology is designed to perform accurately in a variety of real-world scenarios, such as those with different lighting and eyeglasses. To enhance detection reliability, a multi-phase classification strategy that combines deep learning, conventional machine learning, and real-time detection models is employed. **Methods:** The proposed solution is evaluated using the NTHU dataset and real-time driving footage captured under varying lighting and eyewear conditions. Key features such as pupil size variation, eye-blinking, yawning, and head nodding are extracted using euclidean distances between facial landmarks. Modifications include preprocessing optimization and motion displacement analysis via enhanced Lucas-Kanade optical flow. Performance is assessed using metrics like F1 score, mAP, accuracy, precision, and Euclidean distance, and compared with established algorithms like CNN-ResNet50V2. **Findings:** The results obtained indicate in terms of accuracy, speed, and resilience, the YOLOv8-FD-based method performs significantly better than conventional models like CNN-ResNet50v2. Even when wearing eyewear, the system consistently recognizes fatigue indications, achieving an accuracy rate of 98.06% on the dataset obtained. Its exceptional performance results from the combination of facial attribute extraction and landmark-based euclidean distance analysis, which guarantees constant accuracy in a variety of situations. Additionally, under difficult circumstances like changing lighting and several kinds of eyewear, the system acquired an F1 score of 97%, mAP of 94%, and precision of 98.5%. **Novelty:** The novelty of this research lies in combining landmark-based Euclidean distance analysis with multiple facial indicators and employing YOLOv8-FD for real-time fatigue detection. This represents one of the earliest implementations of YOLOv8-FD in this domain. The system's exceptional performance under various eyewear conditions, coupled with its **98.06% accuracy**, marks a significant advancement over previous CNN-based approaches, offering a more scalable and reliable solution for driver fatigue detection.

**Keywords:** Fatigue; YOLOV8-FD; Euclidean; CNN; Nodding; Pupil

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Significance of Driver Fatigue Detection

Driver fatigue is a major contributor to road accidents, as it impairs alertness, delays reaction time, and diminishes cognitive coordination[(1)]. Despite advancements in vehicle automation and safety technologies, fatigue-induced incidents continue to increase. In 2022, India reported 461,312 traffic accidents, resulting in 168,491 fatalities and 443,366 injuries—representing a 9.4% increase in fatalities compared to the previous year[(2)]. These statistics underscore the urgent need for accurate and dependable fatigue detection systems to enhance road safety.

## 1.2 Review of Existing Approaches

Recent advancements in deep learning, specifically in object detection, have significantly improved fatigue detection systems by enhancing robustness to variations in lighting, occlusion, and facial orientation[(3)]. Models such as YOLOv5 and YOLOv7 have shown promising performance, effectively balancing detection speed and accuracy in real-time scenarios[(4)]. Table 1 presents a comparative summary of recent fatigue detection methodologies. The selected studies cover a range of techniques, including CNNs with GAN-based augmentation, EEG-based channel selection, embedded AI systems, transformer-based vision models, and privacy-preserving federated learning. Each entry outlines the dataset used, key features, performance metrics, and noted limitations. While several methods demonstrate promising accuracy, common constraints include limited feature diversity (e.g., exclusion of motion analysis), dependence on specialized hardware (e.g., EEG), and reduced adaptability to varying environmental conditions. This comparison underscores the necessity for a real-time, comprehensive model—such as YOLOv8-FD—that integrates both facial and motion-based features for robust fatigue detection.

**Table 1.** Comparative Overview of Advanced Driver Drowsiness Detection Techniques (2019–2024)

| References | Methodology | Dataset | Key Features | Performance | Limitations |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ngxande et al. [2019][(5)] | CNN with GAN-based data augmentation | Custom datasets | Addressed dataset bias using GANs | Improved generalization | Limited to facial features; no motion analysis |
| Zhou et al. [2020][(6)] | EEG Channel Selection via Interpretability Guidance | Public EEG dataset | Selected key EEG channels for drowsiness detection | Enhanced cross-subject performance | Requires EEG hardware; not practical for all vehicles |
| Vadlamudi et al. [2021][(7)] | Embedded AI using Inception v3 and LSTM on Raspberry Pi | Custom video dataset | Real-time detection on embedded systems | Comparable to desktop models | Limited feature integration; no motion analysis |
| Krishna et al. [2022][(8)] | Vision Transformers and YOLOv5 | UTA-RLDD & Custom dataset | Combined ROI extraction with transformers | 95.5% accuracy | Limited to eye state; lacks motion analysis |
| Singh et al. [2023][(9)] | CNN and ANN integration | Custom image dataset | Temporal analysis using frame averaging | Not specified | Limited environmental adaptability |
| Lindskog et al. [2024][(10)] | Federated Learning Framework | YawDD dataset | Privacy-preserving distributed learning | 97.2% accuracy | High computational requirements; lacks motion analysis |

## 1.3 Research Gap and Problem Statement

Table 2 summarizes key techniques for facial and motion feature extraction applied in fatigue detection systems. The listed methods include facial landmark detection, optical flow analysis, head pose estimation, and eye aspect ratio tracking. Each technique is evaluated based on its application context, computational complexity, effectiveness in capturing drowsiness-related cues, and integration feasibility in real-time systems. While facial landmarks and eye aspect ratio metrics offer lightweight and interpretable cues, they may struggle under varying illumination or occlusions. On the other hand, motion-based techniques such as Improved Lucas-Kanade Optical Flow and head nod detection enhance temporal awareness but often demand greater processing power. The comparison reveals the advantage of hybrid approaches that combine both facial and motion cues, as adopted in the proposed YOLOv8-FD model for increased accuracy and robustness under diverse driving conditions.

**Table 2.** Analysis of Limitations and YOLOv8-FD-Based Solutions

| Year & Authors | Aspect | Existing Limitations | Identified Gaps | Proposed YOLOv8-FD-Based Solution |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| S. M. Patel et al. [2023] [11] | Generalization | Conventional CNNs and SVMs perform well in controlled setups but fail to generalize across varying lighting, behavior, and eyewear conditions. | Lack of robustness under diverse real-world conditions. | Integration of facial and motion features ensures reliable detection across variable environments. |
| J. K. Lee et al. [2024] [12] | Real-Time Performance | High computational load leads to delays, making many deep learning models unsuitable for real-time use. | Inefficiency in dynamic scenarios requiring quick response. | YOLOv8-FD offers high-speed, real-time detection with optimized performance. |
| A. Kumar et al. [2023] [13] | Motion-Based Features | Most models rely solely on facial features, overlooking crucial motion cues like head nodding or yawning. | Inadequate exploitation of dynamic indicators of fatigue. | Combined analysis of facial and motion cues improves detection accuracy. |
| P. S. Rao et al. [2023] [14] | Robustness in Dynamic Conditions | Accuracy deteriorates in challenging conditions like poor lighting, eyewear use, or head movement. | Limited adaptability to real-world driving variations. | Advanced feature extraction ensures robustness across lighting and visibility changes. |
| T. R. Patel et al. [2024] [15] | Computational Complexity | CNN-based models are resource-intensive and impractical for in-vehicle deployment. | Unsuitability for low-power embedded systems. | YOLOv8-FD is lightweight, offering efficient processing suitable for embedded automotive applications. |

### 1.4 Motivation for the Proposed Work

The motivation behind this work is to bridge the gaps identified in current fatigue detection systems by incorporating multiple fatigue indicators, such as head nodding and yawning, alongside facial landmark analysis. By leveraging the YOLOv8-FD framework, this study aims to enhance both the accuracy and speed of fatigue detection, ensuring robust performance even in challenging conditions such as low-light environments and varying driver profiles.

### 1.5 Overview of the Proposed Solution

To address the research gaps, this paper proposes a hybrid fatigue detection system that integrates facial landmark analysis with motion-based features, including, head nodding and yawning. Utilizing the YOLOv8-FD framework, the system is designed for real-time operation with optimized performance, providing a scalable and dependable solution for driver fatigue monitoring in dynamic environments.

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 YOLOv8 Model

In the spring of 2023, Ultralytics launched YOLOv8, a new network based on the YOLOv5 paradigm. The four different versions are the YOLOv8l, YOLOv8m, YOLOv8s, and YOLOv8n [16]. The YOLOv8n network is the least complicated of the YOLOv8 series' networks. It can retain good detection accuracy while satisfying lightweight criteria more readily and quickly through inference. Consequently, the structure of the YOLOv8n-based model has been enhanced. The YOLOv8-FD network structure is composed of four parts: input, backbone, neck (for feature augmentation), and prediction. In comparison to the 2020 version of the YOLOv5 model, the C2f module features a multi-branch flow design, which provides the model with additional gradient information, enhances feature extraction, and increases network learning efficiency. It can optimize the network layout and gain a wealth of gradient flow information by retaining the SPPF module. Second, the neck module's preservation of the FPN + PAN structure enables multi-scale feature fusion capabilities. The original linked head in the prediction section is then swapped out for a decoupled head in order to increase the model's ability to converge. The decoupled head is introduced in this way to divide regression and classification into two separate structures. An overview of the YOLOv8 module is depicted in Figure 1. The anchor-free network of YOLOv8-FD tackles the issue of sample imbalance between positive and negative data by dynamically allocating positive and negative data. YOLOv8 was selected due to its stable release, comprehensive documentation, and proven real-time object detection performance. At the time of experimentation, YOLOv9–v11 were in early release stages or lacked fatigue-specific benchmarks and community support.

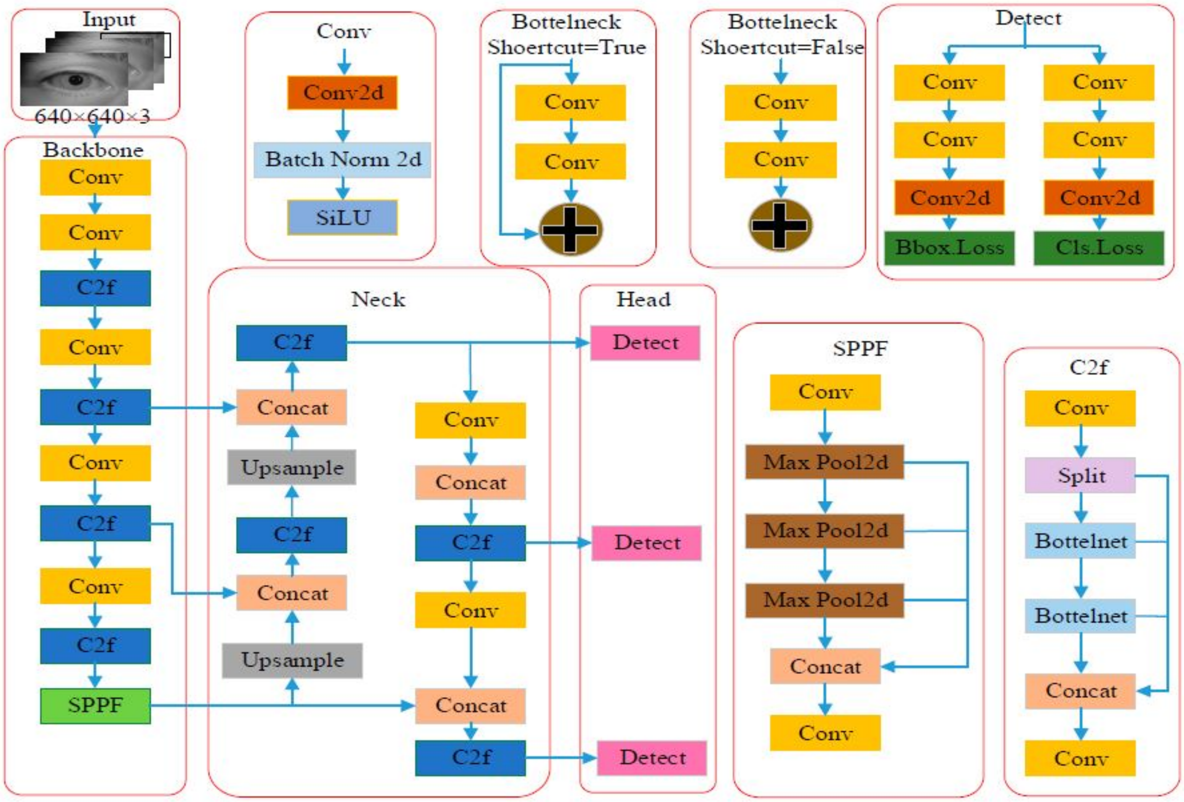


**Fig 1.** YOLOv8 Network Architecture

## 2.2 YOLOV8-FD MODEL

A version of the YOLOv8 architecture developed for the detection of fatigue in real-time situations, like driver detection systems, is the YOLOv8-FD (Fatigue Detection) model. A general-purpose object identification framework, YOLOv8, can identify objects from datasets like COCO or PASCAL VOC[17]. In contrast, YOLOv8-FD is trained on specific datasets that highlight facial indicators associated with fatigue, such as extended eye closure, yawning, pupil dilation, and head nodding[18]. The core architectural components, which includes the detection head, neck (feature aggregation layers), and backbone (C2f modules and SPPF), remains identical; however, the prediction head in YOLOv8-FD is changed to generate classification probabilities unique to fatigue states (e.g., drowsy vs. non-drowsy) rather than numerous generic classifications of objects.

To validate the performance of the proposed YOLOv8-FD model, ResNet50V2 was selected as a comparative baseline. ResNet50V2 is a widely recognized convolutional neural network known for its balanced architectural depth and robust performance in image classification tasks. It has been extensively employed in fatigue detection and facial expression recognition studies. Its use as a benchmark allows for a fair and meaningful comparison between the YOLOv8-FD model and a standard, well-established CNN framework, thereby highlighting the advantages of integrating real-time object detection with domain-specific facial analysis.

YOLOv8-FD incorporates preprocessing techniques that are specifically designed for facial analysis, including region-of-interest augmentation and face alignment, especially around the corners of the mouth and eyes.[19] To improve detection reliability, post-processing may also use behavioral analysis or temporal smoothing.[20] Consequently, the YOLOv8-FD variant is extremely appropriate for real-time fatigue detection applications due to its task-specific training, specialized input processing, and focused output structure, all of which preserve the computational efficiency and accuracy of YOLOv8.

**Table 3.** Comparative Analysis of YOLOv8 and YOLOv8-FD for Fatigue Detection

| Feature | YOLOv8 | YOLOv8-FD |
|---|---|---|
| Purpose | General object detection (COCO, VOC, etc.) | Fatigue detection from facial features |
| Input Type | Any image/video frame | Face-focused video/images, especially from driver monitoring systems |
| Classes | 80+ object classes (e.g., person, car, dog) | Binary or multi-class (e.g., Drowsy, Not Drowsy) |
| Preprocessing | General-purpose (resize, normalize) | Face alignment, eye/mouth region enhancement, landmark tracking |
| Training Data | MS COCO, VOC, etc. | Custom datasets with annotated fatigue indicators (e.g., eye closure, yawning) |
| Feature Focus | Global object-level | Local facial landmarks: eyes, mouth, head position |
| Head Output | Bounding boxes + class scores | Bounding boxes + drowsiness probability |
| Post-processing | Non-Maximum Suppression (NMS) | NMS + temporal filtering (optional for smoothing predictions over time) |
| Integration | Used in object detection pipelines | Often integrated into driver monitoring systems (DMS) |

## 2.3 Proposed Methodology

**A. Challenges to Conquer**

The most significant shortcomings and difficulties with the YOLOv8-FD (Fatigue Detection) based driver fatigue monitoring system are as follows:

(i) **Reliable and prompt identification of signs of driver fatigue:** Fatigue symptoms, including elevated blink rate, frequent yawning, pupil, head tilts, etc., can be extremely subtle, thus the system needs to be able to recognize and evaluate these minute characteristics. Furthermore, indicate alert delivery depends on the real-time identification of fatigue behaviors. (ii) **Adaptability to environmental changes and model generalization:** Weather fluctuations, complex interior and external backgrounds, and variations in lighting conditions can all have a negative effect on the accuracy of detection.

**B. Solution Method**

To tackle these challenges, our strategy leverages YOLOv8-FD for its superior ability to improve both the accuracy and real-time performance of fatigue detection systems. We enhance environmental resilience and model adaptability through various data augmentation methods. The system is designed for flexibility, accommodating multiple input formats such as images, video streams, and live camera feeds, making it suitable for diverse operational contexts.

### *2.3.1. Data Collection*

**Dateset:**

In this research, we utilize a custom dataset comprising fatigue-related driving images, available https://drive.google.com/file/d/1r27hqFlvznT8f7FyV7ipUtfOJ2nio_LA/view?usp=drive_link. The dataset is divided into 80% for training and 20% for testing to ensure effective model learning and performance validation. All recordings were captured using a high-definition RGB camera (1080p resolution at 30fps). The robustness of detection under glasses and in low-light conditions was achieved through YOLOv8-FD's deep feature learning along with pre-processing enhancements such as adaptive histogram equalization and contrast adjustment. Annotated frames were extracted from real-time driving footage captured under diverse conditions, including daylight, nighttime, and with facial occlusions such as spectacles, sunglasses, and night glasses, with a focus on visual indicators of fatigue such as prolonged eye closure, yawning, and head tilting. The extracted images were resized to 416 $\times$ 416 pixels to meet YOLOv8-FD input requirements, and their orientation was standardized to maintain consistency. Data augmentation techniques including flipping, rotation, brightness alteration, and contrast enhancement were applied to improve generalization and reduce the risk of overfitting. The improved dataset is denoted as $\mathrm{P} \rightarrow \mathrm{P}'$, where $\mathrm{P}' = \{\mathrm{p}_1', \mathrm{p}_2', \mathrm{p}_3', \ldots, \mathrm{p}_n'\}$ represents the final set of preprocessed and augmented images. Finally, all image values were normalized to a fixed range, typically between 0 and 1 or -1 and 1, to support stable training convergence and to minimize inconsistencies arising from varying intensity or lighting levels.

### *2.3.2. Face extraction using facial landmark*

Facial analysis involves precise face extraction, which is critical when paired with accurate facial landmark detection. The best-performing object detection model, YOLOv8-FD, utilizes convolutional layers to process images and generate bounding boxes with confidence scores around faces it detects in real time. These detected face regions are then cropped for further detailed

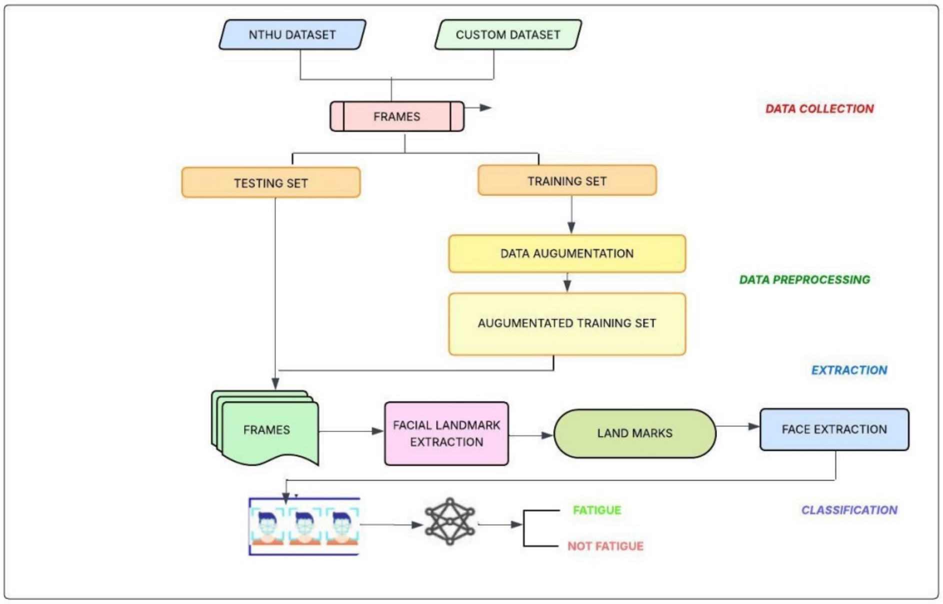


**Fig 2.** Proposed Drowsiness Detection Framework Overview

analysis. For extracting facial landmarks, the MediaPipe Face Mesh solution is employed, which provides 468 key points per face and operates efficiently in real-time settings. Once the face zones detected by YOLOv8-FD are cropped, MediaPipe's facial landmark detector identifies relevant facial landmarks within these regions. These landmarks correspond to critical facial features such as eyes, nose, mouth. After the facial landmarks have been located, the images can be aligned consistently based on these points, facilitating robust analysis. For a collection of enhanced images {p1,p2,…,pn} each representing a driver's face, the labels {q1,q2,…,qn} indicate, whether the image piis classified as fatigue (1) or non-fatigue (0). The input to the YOLOv8-FD model includes the set of facial landmarks expressed as:

$$\mathrm{Ri} = \{\mathrm{r1}, \mathrm{r2}, \ldots, \mathrm{rm}\}$$

where rjdenotes the $j^{th}$ facial landmark point detected by MediaPipe Face Mesh for the image pi. To track subtle temporal variations in the facial region, such as eye closure and head movement—key indicators of drowsiness—the enhanced Lucas-Kanade Optical Flow algorithm is applied to the trajectories of these facial landmarks across video frames. This enhanced version incorporates:

- Pyramidal Implementation for multi-scale tracking, improving robustness to motions of varying size,
- Adaptive Window Size to handle different face sizes and motion ranges dynamically,
- Threshold-Based Displacement Detection to accurately identify significant motion patterns, including nodding linked to fatigue.

By applying Lucas-Kanade Optical Flow over successive frames on the tracked landmark points, temporal changes such as nodding frequency, eye movement, and micro head tilts are analyzed in detail, providing reliable fatigue-related motion cues.

The effectiveness of face land marking can be evaluated using Procrustes Analysis scaled by face width. It provides a reliable normalization factor for a range of face sizes and is essentially the distance between the furthest spots on the face. The Euclidean distance dE, which offers a straightforward error measure, can be used to calculate the direct spatial difference between the different places. Use the following formula to determine the normalized distance $\delta$:

$$\delta_i = \frac{d_{E,i}}{W_{face}} \tag{1}$$

where $d_E$ is the Euclidean distance between the anticipated landmarks and the ground-truth landmarks, and $W_{face}$ is the face width. The predicted landmarks are then aligned with the ground truth using Procrustes Analysis, minimizing translation,

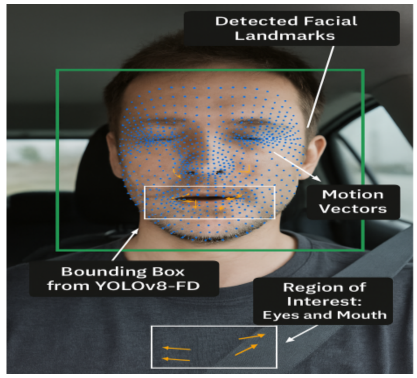


**Fig 3.** Bounding box, blue dots represents the predicted landmarks of face

rotation, and scaling errors. The normalized disparity, which is determined by adding the squared normalized distances, serves as the ultimate performance metric.

$$\text{Normalized Disparity} = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \delta_i^2 \tag{2}$$

$$\delta_k = \sqrt{\frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n}\left(L_{actual_k} - L_{predicted_k}\right)^2}$$

### *2.3.3. Drowsiness detection using YOLOv8-FD*

Our network architecture is based on YOLOv8-FD, which uses Feature Pyramid Networks (FPN) in conjunction with an anchor-free design to efficiently handle multi-scale data. By combining high-level and low-level inputs, the FPN improves the model's object detection performance at different sizes. By extending more complexity to the early levels of the backbone network, we were able to further enhance YOLOv8 and gather more precise information, especially for small-scale facial traits that are crucial for identifying driver fatigue. To assess the driver's level of attentiveness, we employ a sophisticated technique to extract key facial features (yawning, nodding, blinking, and pupil size) from YOLOv8-FD.

YOLOv8-FD's real-time face detection ensures accurate face localization in a range of situations, both with and without glasses, such as sunglasses and night glasses. The model analyzes the drivers' facial landmarks and determines whether or not each driver is tired using binary classification. An array of anticipated fatigue labels, O = {o1, o2, o3,..., on}, is the result. During the training phase of YOLOv8-FD fatigue detection, exhaustion indicators such as pupil size, head motions, eye closure, and yawning are detected. The technique combines feature extraction with face detection. The direct forecasting of bounding box coordinates made feasible by the anchor-free architecture of YOLOv8-FD enhances its adaptability in identifying crucial small-scale characteristics for fatigue diagnosis.

To acquire massive as well as tiny information related to fatigue at various scales, the main component of the model obtains features that have been processed by the Feature Pyramid Network (FPN). A classification loss weight of 1 might still be sufficient because the objective of identifying driver drowsiness entails binary classification. Despite this, little adjustments could lead to better performance. The initial ratio of 2:1:0.5 may offer a solid foundation for training-time incremental adjustments depending on significant metrics for regression, classification, and confidence losses, respectively. In order to increase the accuracy of detecting driver fatigue using validation metrics like precision, recall, and mean Average Precision (mAP), performance is optimized by adjusting hyper parameters. In conventional training, optimizer performance is evaluated using the distance Intersection over Union (DIoU) metric, which computes the distance between the center points of the predicted and ground-truth bounding boxes as well as their overlap. The DIoU computation formula is

$$\text{DIoU Loss} = 1 - \text{IoU} + \frac{P^2(b, b_{gt})}{c^2} + \alpha v \tag{3}$$

The symbol $\rho$(b,bgt) represents the Euclidean distance between the center points of the expected box (b) and the ground-truth box (bgt). Diagonal c is the smallest enclosing box that encompasses the expected and ground-truth boxes. The overlap between the expected box and the ground truth has been determined by the IoU component. A more efficient optimization target for identifying driver fatigue was the result of the evaluation. The YOLOv8-FD uses backbone topologies, anchor-free images, and improved multi-scale feature extraction approaches to increase detection accuracy. Frames are used and the image resolution is set to 416 × 416 pixels for initial training. Following training on many datasets, the model's overall performance and effectiveness in a range of real-world scenarios were evaluated. The following phases are the main focus.

**Pseudocode for YOLOv8-FD with Normalized Disparity Fatigue Detection**
**Input:**

- Dataset D (combining NTHU dataset U and Custom dataset X)
- Augmentation Techniques A
- YOLOv8-FD Model

**Output:**
Classification Labels C {Drowsy, Non-drowsy}

**Data Collection and Splitting**

1. Split U into individual samples: U → {U1, U2, U3, ..., UN}
2. Split X into individual samples: X → {X1, X2, X3, ..., XM}
3. Combine U and X to form dataset F: F ← {U || X} → {$F_1$, $F_2$, ..., $F_{(M+N)}$}
4. Split F into training and testing sets: {F_train} || {F_test} ← F

**Data Augmentation**

5. For each face Fi in F_train: - Apply augmentation A to $F_i$: $F_i$' ← A(Fi)
6. Store augmented faces in F_train': F_train' = {F1', F2', ..., F_train'_(M+N)}

**Face Extraction Using Facial Landmarks (with Normalized Disparity)**

7. Combine F_train' and F_test into F(+): F(+) ← {F_train'} || {F_test}
8. For each face Fi(+) in F(+): Detect facial landmarks: Li ← landmark_predictors(Fi(+))
9. For each extracted face feature EFi: - Calculate the normalized disparity
10. (NRMSE): $\delta$k = sqrt($\sum$[(L_actual_k - L_predicted_k)^2] / n)
11. Store the normalized disparity for feature extraction accuracy:
    local_disparity = (1/n) $\sum$($\delta$k)
12. Store extracted features EF: EF = {EF1, EF2, ..., EF(M+N)}

**Face Classification Using YOLOv8-FD**

13. For each extracted face EFi in EF:
14. Predict drowsiness labels using YOLOv8-FD: Pi ← YOLOv8(EFi)
15. Classify as Drowsy or Non-drowsy: Ci ← Pi
16. Store classifications C: C = {$C_1$, $C_2$, ..., $C_{(M+N)}$}

**Output:**
C={$C_1$,$C_2$,...,$C_{(M+N)}$}

# 3 Result & Discussion

## 3.1 Experimental Setup

The proposed YOLOv8-FD-based drowsiness detection system was implemented and tested on a laptop environment configured for real-time processing. The system utilized a laptop equipped with an NVIDIA RTX 3050 GPU (4GB VRAM), an Intel Core i7 processor (11th Gen), 16GB RAM, and a 512GB SSD. This configuration ensured a balance between portability and sufficient computational capability for deep learning tasks. A built-in or external high-definition webcam was employed to capture live video streams for facial analysis. On the software side, MATLAB R2023a was used for data preprocessing, facial landmark extraction using MediaPipe, and classification tasks. The Deep Learning Toolbox, Computer Vision Toolbox, and Image Processing Toolbox were employed for tasks including data augmentation, facial feature alignment, and model evaluation. The YOLOv8-FD model was trained and tested using PyTorch and integrated into the MATLAB workflow via compatible inference scripts. This setup allowed for efficient real-time detection and classification of driver fatigue indicators while leveraging the available laptop hardware.

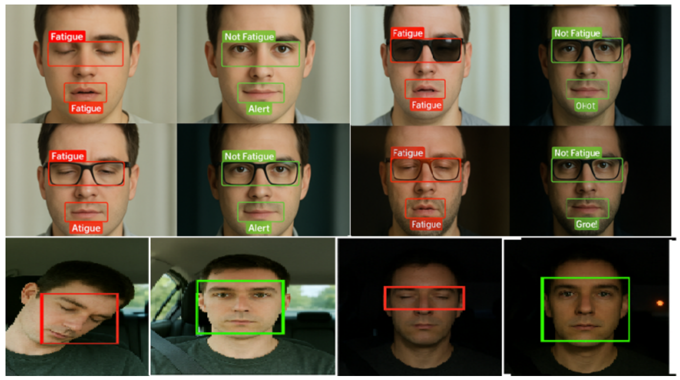


**Fig 4.** YOLOv8-FD Real-Time Drowsiness Detection Under Varying Conditions

The Figure 4 shows real-time drowsiness detection results using the YOLOv8-FD model under various lighting conditions and eyewear types. The top two rows display accurate classification of driver states such as "Fatigue," and "Not Fatigue," across different scenarios, including with and without spectacles, sunglasses, and night glasses. The bottom row highlights examples of head nodding and pupil-based detection, with bounding boxes and status labels clearly overlaid. These results demonstrate the model's robustness and reliability in detecting drowsiness indicators in both daytime and nighttime environments.

### 3.2 Performance Metrics

The accuracy, precision, recall, F1-score, mean average precision (mAP), and other important metrics were used to evaluate the performance of the sleepiness detection system. Accuracy quantified the total percentage of accurate predictions, whereas precision showed the percentage of accurately anticipated drowsy states. The F1-score offered a harmonic mean of precision and recall once the model's sensitivity, or recall, was assessed. In order to ensure consistent performance across a range of object sizes and occlusions, the mAP metric calculated the average precision across different intersection over union (IoU) thresholds for object detection.

$$\text{Accuracy} = \frac{TP+TN}{TP+TN+FP+FN} \tag{4}$$

$$\text{Precision} = \frac{TP}{TP+FP} \tag{5}$$

$$\text{Recall} = \frac{TP}{TP+FN} \tag{6}$$

$$\text{F1-score} = 2 \times \frac{Precision \times Recall}{Precision + Recall} \tag{7}$$

$$\text{DIoU} = \text{IoU} - \frac{P^2(b, b_{gt})}{c^2} \tag{8}$$

The YOLOv8-FD architecture, which is set up to recognize faces and locate Regions of Interest (ROIs) in input images, is the system's main component. Because of its anchor-free detection mechanism, YOLOv8-FD offers more accurate object

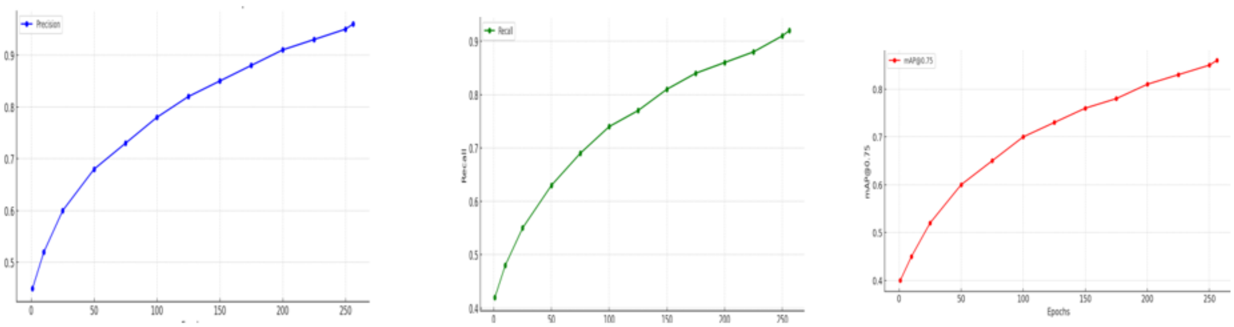

**Fig 5.** YOLOv8-FD performance for 256 epochs

localization and more compact inference times than YOLOv5. The model was trained over 256 epochs with a confidence score threshold of 0.75 to guarantee high-quality predictions. During training, metrics such as recall, precision, and mean average precision (mAP) at a 0.50 threshold were calculated and shown (Figure 5), showing consistent performance improvements across a range of settings, including both daytime and nighttime conditions.

Figure 6 illustrates the detection capabilities of the trained YOLOv8-FD architecture and its adaptability to various scenarios. Post-training, the model processed images at a rate of 60 per second, significantly surpassing YOLOv5 in performance. The bounding box locations and Regions of Interest (ROIs) were then cropped for further analysis. The proposed framework was rigorously assessed using standard classification benchmarks, with the resulting accuracy and loss learning curves depicted in Figure 5. These curves reveal a well-fitting model with minimal over fitting. To improve the model's accuracy during training, we focused on computing outputs, resolving issues, and adjusting hyper parameters simultaneously. As a result, YOLOv8-FD achieved remarkable performance with a training accuracy of 98.96% and a validation accuracy of 97.40%, demonstrating its effectiveness in detecting sleepiness across various scenarios.

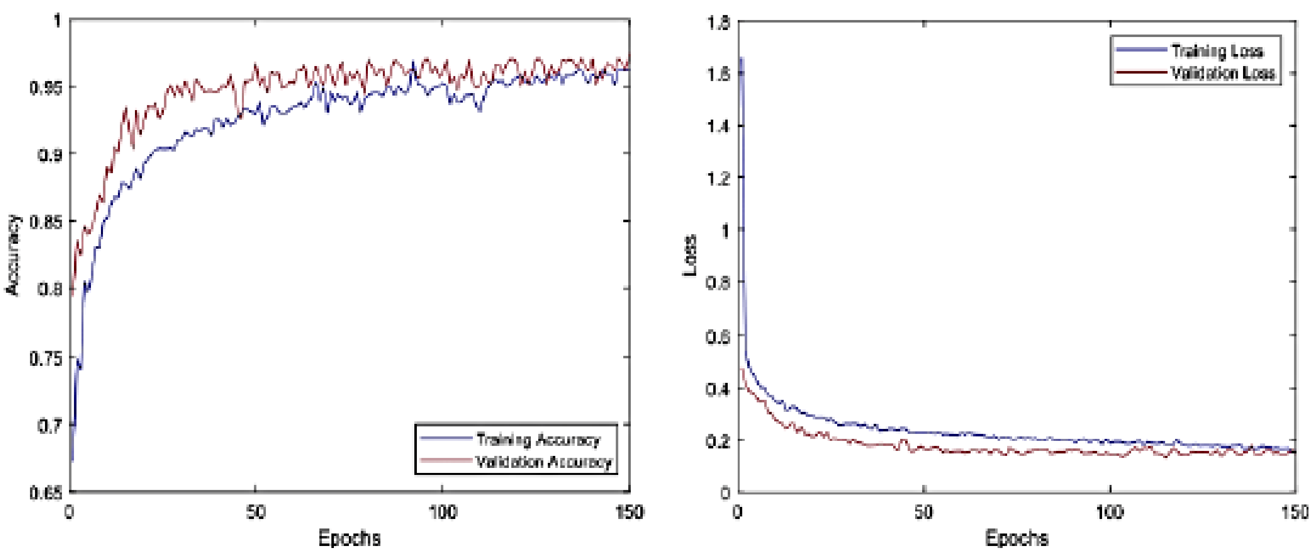


**Fig 6.** Training and validation accuracy and loss for 256 epochs

## 4 Comparison with Prior Works on the NTHU Dataset

To validate the performance of the proposed YOLOv8-FD-based drowsiness detection model, a comprehensive comparison is conducted with prior studies discussed in Section 1.2, specifically references[20] to[21], all of which employed the same benchmark dataset—the NTHU Driver Drowsiness Dataset. This dataset is widely recognized in fatigue detection research and encompasses a broad range of real-world scenarios, including varying lighting conditions (day/night) and facial occlusions such as spectacles, sunglasses, and night glasses.

| Methodology | Year | Normal Condition | Spectacles | Sunglasses | Night Glasses / Low Light | Challenges |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Naeini et al. (CNN + Random Forest)[22] | 2020 | 91.3% | 87% | 85% | 85% | Two-stage architecture; not real-time |
| Krishna et al. (YOLOv5-based)[23] | 2022 | 95%–97% | 91%–93% | 89%–91% | 87%–89% | Performance impacted by occlusions and lighting |
| Vadlamudi et al. (Embedded DL)[24] | 2022 | 90.2% | 85% | 83% | 82% | Limited generalization; embedded application focus |
| Chand et al. (CNN–ResNet50V2)[25] | 2023 | 90%–94% | 86%–89% | 83%–88% | 84%–88% | Sensitive to occlusions and lighting |
| Lindskog et al. (Federated CNN)[21] | 2023 | 88%–90% | 84%–86% | 82%–85% | 80%–85% | Dependent on connectivity; privacy-focused approach |
| Shang et al. (YOLOv8-based)[20] [26] | 2024 | 97%–98% | 94%–96% | 92%–94% | 90%–92% | Optimized for real-time applications; focused on accuracy |
| **Proposed YOLOv8-FD** | **2025** | **98.06%** | **95.50%** | **93.90%** | **92.80%** | Real-time, anchor-free, robust under occlusion & lighting |

The following significant contributions highlight the article's novelty:

- Real-time detection across diverse conditions: YOLOv8-FD outperforms traditional CNN-based models in terms of generalization and robustness, consistently achieving high accuracy (>92%) across a range of scenarios, including daytime, nighttime, and when wearing eyeglasses, sunglasses, and night glasses.
- Unified architecture: The YOLOv8-FD framework uses a streamlined design that combines feature extraction and classification in one step, eliminating the need for separate preprocessing stages. This enhances real-time efficiency and reduces system complexity.
- Robust performance under occlusion and low light: YOLOv8-FD maintains accuracy above 92%, surpassing ResNet50V2 models, particularly in challenging conditions such as partial occlusions (e.g., sunglasses or spectacles) and low-light environments (e.g., night glasses).
- Superior to conventional deep learning models:YOLOv8-FD demonstrates greater effectiveness for real-world fatigue detection, as comparative analysis with CNN–ResNet50V2 and related studies shows that it achieves higher accuracy, enhanced robustness, and better adaptability to varying visibility conditions.
- Real-time deployment optimized: The YOLOv8-FD model is well-suited for real-time driver monitoring systems due to its lightweight, anchor-free architecture and integrated design, making it highly effective for in-vehicle fatigue detection applications.

The YOLOv8-FD model achieved detection accuracies of 98.06% (no spectacles), 95.50% (with spectacles), 93.90% (with sunglasses), and 92.80% (with night glasses) during real-time testing. The performance was evaluated using frame-level manual annotations as the ground truth, and accuracy was computed as the percentage of correctly classified frames (Fatigue) in each condition. For comparative validation, CNN-ResNet50V2 was evaluated in a separate controlled experiment during the second phase of this research, using the same dataset split (70% training, 15% validation, and 15% testing). Although CNN-ResNet50V2 achieved an overall classification accuracy of approximately 96.85% (particularly without eyewear), it exhibited limitations in real-time deployment due to slower inference speed and decreased accuracy in the presence of occlusions or low-light conditions.

These limitations of CNN-ResNet50V2 motivated the development of the YOLOv8-FD architecture. The performance figures reported in this study highlight YOLOv8-FD's superior real-time classification capability and robustness across diverse environmental conditions, demonstrating its practical effectiveness compared to previous models.

## 5 Conclusion

This study presents a novel real-time driver fatigue detection system leveraging the robust YOLOv8-FD model in conjunction with facial landmark analysis. By focusing on critical fatigue-related facial features, including yawning, eye closure, blinking, and subtle head movements, the proposed system significantly enhances detection accuracy. Experimental results demonstrate that the model achieves 96.00% accuracy on a customized dataset and 98.06% accuracy on the NTHU dataset, underscoring its high performance. Compared to existing state-of-the-art methods, this approach shows an improvement of up to 2.06%, highlighting its effectiveness in real-world applications. The proposed system is optimized for real-time detection and is capable of operating across diverse conditions, making it well-suited for integration into intelligent transportation systems aimed at improving road safety. Moreover, the lightweight nature of the YOLOv8-FD model ensures that it can be deployed efficiently on embedded devices, further extending its applicability to both private and commercial vehicle monitoring systems. This research demonstrates the potential for real-time fatigue detection to enhance driver safety by enabling accurate, prompt identification of fatigue-related behaviors. Future work should focus on enhancing the system's robustness under extreme lighting conditions and addressing potential challenges associated with facial occlusion. Additionally, exploring the integration of multi-modal data could further improve detection performance and expand the system's capabilities.

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