

SimpliScopeX: Enhanced Deep Learning Model for Identification of Microscopic Image of Simplicia Fragments of Medicinal Plant Leaves

Ricky Indra Gunawan¹, Alam Rahmatulloh¹, Rianto^{[1,*](#page-0-0)}, Irfan Darmawan², Randi Rizal³, Vinda Maharani Patricia⁴, Nur Widiyasono¹

¹ Department of Informatics, Faculty of Engineering, Siliwangi University, Siliwangi Street, Tasikmalaya, Indonesia
² Department of Information Systems, Faculty of Industrial Engineering, Telkom University, Bandung, In

² Department of Information Systems, Faculty of Industrial Engineering, Telkom University, Bandung, Indonesia

3 Department of Computer Science, Faculty of Information and Communication Technology, Technical University of Malaysia Melaka, Malaysia

4 Department of Pharmacy, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Bandung Islamic University, Bandung, Indonesia

* *Corresponding author. E-mail address: rianto@unsil.ac.id*

1. Introduction

Millions of plant species exist on Earth. Humans can utilize plants as a source of food, clothing, and medicine. Medicinal plants can be used as raw materials for traditional and modern medicine. Along with the development of the "Back to Nature" trend, people are starting to turn to herbal medicine or traditional medicine derived from nature. The community likes herbal medicine because it is relatively cheap and easily accessible. The community also believes that using herbal medicines derived from plants has fewer side effects than chemical drugs. Therefore, traditional drug producers are increasingly active, and people are starting to cultivate medicinal plants with the term TOGA (Family Medicinal Plants) [1].

Various parts of medicinal plants can be utilized as raw materials for medicine, such as leaves, rhizomes, fruits, roots, barks, flowers, seeds, tubers, sap, and hanging roots [2]. Since ancient times, these herbal plants have been used effortlessly, such as boiling and taking water from the skin or leaves by mashing them until they are smooth and mixed to cure various diseases. The community has been doing this for generations, but not all have been identified [3]. Plants usually used as simplicia are plant materials that do not change shape and are only dried [4]. The drying process may be accomplished by using the wind, the sun, or an oven with a temperature of not more than 60oC [5].

The correctness of medicinal plant simplicia can be identified in two ways, namely plant determination using wet simplicia and organoleptic testing macroscopically by observing the distinctive color, taste, and smell of simplicia powder or microscopically using a microscope to obtain clear images [6]. This test is intended to identify fragments in simplicia powders [7-9].

Information regarding microscopic tests in medicinal plant research must be made available. Some of them only mentioned microscopic fragments without any discussion regarding the correctness of the simplicia, which should have been the aim of the test [9-13].

In determining the correctness of the simplicia material, of course, it must go through matching the microscopic test results with the reference. References for standard microscopic parameters of simplicia powder still need to be completed for all medicinal plants. Some currently available references are the Indonesian Herbal Pharmacopoeia [14] and the Indonesian Materia Medika [15]. Manual matching takes quite a long time and is only partially accurate due to the possibility of human error and unclear images of the microscopic test results.

In the era of the digital industry 4.0, technological advances are driving very fast, so the role of technology in identifying dry simplicia powder as a standard reference for microscopic test results is expected to be faster and more accurate. Image processing is one way to identify the fragments of dry simplicia powder. Image processing can be done by enhancing the image [16]. One of the image enhancement approaches used in microscopic images is converting them to grayscale, followed by applying the BCV threshold to enhance the images in the spatial domain [17]. To prevent interference from the color sample during the feature extraction process, another image enhancement technique has also been used in the case of image classification on microscopic images of the leaf epidermis. This technique involves converting the image to grayscale and using a contrast enhancement procedure [18].

In addition to image processing, images need to be extracted into features so that images can be processed into machine learning models. This process can be carried out using various methods, including the Gray Level Co-Occurrence Matrix (GLCM). Energy, contrast, correlation, and homogeneity are the extracted features, and these features could be used to build a high-accuracy model [19] or classified using the Euclidean distance [20]. Furthermore, a study has been conducted on image identification of rice leaf diseases using the Gabor Wavelet and K-Means Clustering methods with an accuracy rate of up to 70% [21].

Besides traditional machine learning, machine learning modeling can also be done using deep learning methods. The deep learning method has automatic feature extraction in images [22-24]. One type of deep learning capable of performing image classification is the Convolutional Neural Network (CNN). Several previous studies are related to the use of Convolutional Neural Networks in the case of image classification, as has been done by [23,25]. Apart from using the Convolutional Neural Network, several studies use pre-trained deep learning models by implementing the transfer learning method on the Convolutional Neural Network. Based on research conducted by [26] in the case of the classification of microscopic images of unstained skin samples, it was found that EfficientNetB0 produced the highest accuracy value of 98.52%, AUC of 0.99, and F1 score of 0.98 with a sensitivity of 97.6% and a specificity 99.4% compared to other popular pre-trained deep learning model architectures, such as VGG16, ResNet50, and MobileNet. The research was also conducted by [24] using the ensemble method on the Inception, ResNet, and VGG-16 architectures. Research related to the microscopic topic of medicinal plant leaf simplicia was conducted by [27], who compared the architectures of VGG16, InceptionV3, MobileNet, and Xception and obtained results that the VGG16 architecture leading with an accuracy of 95.42%. In addition, based on research conducted by [28,29], it produces a validation accuracy of 67.29% using the MikrobatX model, a modified version of EfficientNetB0.

One of Google's popular open-source code libraries is used to develop deep learning models, namely TensorFlow. TensorFlow computations can be executed with little or no modification on a wide range of heterogeneous systems, from mobile devices like phones and tablets to large-scale distributed systems with hundreds of machines and thousands of computational devices like GPU cards [30]. Meanwhile, Keras is a lightweight framework with a high-level application programming interface (API) built on top of TensorFlow [31]. TensorFlow is best suited for tasks requiring high accuracy, as it provides greater flexibility in the integration process and how a network can be defined and trained, with greater control over the training flow due to complexity, resulting in higher overall accuracy [32].

Thus, this research was carried out as an innovative step through the application of technology to identify parts of microscopic fragments of dried leaf simplicia and names of medicinal plant species using the proposed deep-learning model architecture. The proposed model is projected to produce and outperform other deep learning models in previous studies, starting from the completeness of the dataset used, determining optimal hyperparameters, using layers in the proposed model architecture, and the performance of the proposed model. The resulting knowledge, algorithms, and models are stored in a file with an HDF5 format, which can later be applied to an application, both web-based and mobile. This study contributes by providing a new dataset, investigating the most recent research in the field of microscopic image analysis and identification of simplicia fragments from medicinal plant leaves, suggesting a new deep learning model that can produce better accuracy than previous research, and comparing the proposed model architecture with the basic model to find out how much influence the proposed model has with the various strategies that have been given and experimented compared to the baseline model.

1.1 Related Work

Based on the study results and analysis of the latest survey papers and technical papers, several requirements must be met in developing a deep learning model that can be used to classify microscopic images of simplicia leaf fragments. Some of these needs include applying techniques

used in image processing, feature extraction techniques, and the required deep learning model architecture.

Based on the description of the various needs studied from the various previous studies, the following is a review of the state-of-the-art and related research that will be discussed.

1.1.1 Image processing

Image processing is one of the tasks that is quite important in the case of image classification. In recent years, researchers have used many image-processing techniques and methods as the subject of discussion in image-processing tasks. Color Conversion, Segmentation, Edge Detection, and Noise Reduction or Image Restoration are some of them. The choice of image processing technique depends on the condition of the image to be used.

Previous studies involving microscopic images, such as studies conducted by [17,24,28,33] used Grayscale Conversion on average. However, some do not do any preprocessing like research conducted by [27]. According to these research, the grayscale color conversion technique is generally used for image processing. Therefore, in this study, the color conversion method will be carried out with the addition of center cropping to adjust the image shape and size to match the image size required in the EfficientNetB0 architecture model.

1.1.2 Feature extraction

Feature extraction aims to transform the original data into a more usable, smaller, or denser size to increase classifier efficiency. Feature extraction techniques for the classification process are very diverse. Based on research conducted by [20], the GLCM technique could extract texture features in images, but the weakness of the GLCM technique was that it could not extract shape features. On the other hand, studies use the Regionprops Operator [17] and Hu's Moment [33] techniques, which can extract shape features but cannot extract texture features. In addition, studies are using the SIFT algorithm with CNN, as was done by [28]. However, research shows that CNN achieves performance comparable to SIFT in accuracy and outperforms Bag of Visual Words (BoVW). SIFT match is limited to small databases, while CNN and BoVW can be used for moderate databases and quickly expand for large-scale retrieval. CNN and BoVW are faster for feature extraction and fetching than SIFT, but SIFT outperforms accuracy. Because this research uses data, the use of SIFT is omitted because it is not suitable for use on large datasets, so it does not take up a sizeable computational process and takes a long time.

This is also supported by a series of other previous studies that have used CNN as automatic feature extraction in the case of macroscopic and microscopic image classification, as was done by [23,24,26,28,34,35]. Therefore, in this study, the CNN concept will automatically extract features available in the EfficientNetB0 architecture.

1.1.3 The architecture of deep learning models

Based on a study conducted by [26], it can be concluded that a model composed of the EfficientNetB0 architecture produces higher final accuracy results than other pre-trained models, such as VGG16, MobileNet and ResNet50 in the case of classification of microscopic images of skin samples. In addition, research on the microscopic classification of medicinal plant leaves has also been carried out by [27] using the VGG16, MobileNet, Xception, and InceptionV3 architectures. Research in the case of microscopic classification of medicinal plant leaf simplicia using EfficientNetB0 was the first time conducted by [28]. However, this study still needs to improve, namely the relatively low accuracy, around 67.29% in validation accuracy. Therefore, to fill the research gap, it is necessary to add or modify layers and hyperparameter tuning to a model based on the EfficientNetB0 architecture for cases of classification of microscopic images of medicinal plant leaf simplicia, which are expected to produce better accuracy.

Based on the explanation that has been described, this research has an update in terms of problems that add to the types of plants identified and the literature available in this case, as well as updates in terms of the methods used in the process of image processing, feature extraction, and machine learning models using deep learning in the case of identification of species and parts of simplicia fragments of medicinal plant leaves based on microscopic images. This study will use two models, namely the SimpliScopeX model and the baseline model, as a comparison.

2. Methodology

This work's deep learning development methodology begins with building the dataset, then data preparation and modeling. The final step is to evaluate the results of the model training process. The schematic of the proposed model for identifying species and fragments of medicinal plant leaf fragments based on microscopic images is shown in Figure 1. The dataset was then processed using the EfficientNetB0 architecture. The novelty of this work comes from the use of image processing techniques and the ReduceLROnPlateau in callback functions. Subsequently, various data augmentation techniques were employed in this study.

Fig. 1. The proposed microscopic simplicia identification scheme

2.1 Dataset

In this research, image data sets have been collected from 6 different types of medicinal plants. Each medicinal plant consists of 5 fragments. Each fragment contains 200 image data, so one plant species has 1000 images. Because six types of medicinal plants were studied, the total number of images collected was 6000. Images were taken manually using a binocular microscope with a magnification of 40x. The images taken have the provisions of the planned image data. These provisions are contained in Table 1. Figure 2 is an example of data obtained from microscopic images using a microscope with a magnification of 40x.

Fig. 2. Example of microscopic image data of simplicia of medicinal plant leaves

2.2 Data Preparation

Data preparation stages as a whole are illustrated in Figure 3. In order to lessen the bias toward color features, the image data is first subjected to a grayscale conversion, which turns RGB images into grayscale images. Following that, the center-cropping method changes the image's shape and size to meet the image dimensions required by the EfficientNetB0 architectural model.

Fig. 3. Data preparation stages

Fig. 4. Example of image data that has been processed

Figure 4 shows the image processing of katuk leaves, the upper epidermis fragments with stomata. After that, the entire dataset is divided into training data, validation data, and testing data with a ratio of 60:20:20, so that obtained training data for 60% of the total number of images, validation data for 20% of the total number of images and testing data of 20 % of the total number of images.

Table 2

Dataset Details

Figure 5 is an example of a sample of data that has gone through the augmentation process. While at the data augmentation stage, several techniques were carried out, including rotation, horizontal flip, vertical flip, and fill. Details regarding the parameters in the data augmentation process can be seen in Table 2.

Fig. 5. Example of augmented image data

2.3 Modeling and Optimization

The pre-trained model architecture will be used as the basic model architecture (baseline model), namely EfficientNetB0, which will conduct experiments to modify or add layers to the architecture. Figure 6 is the architectural baseline model used as a reference point to analyze comparisons.

		input:		[(None, 224, 224, 3)]				
	EfficientNetB0 flatten Flatten dense Dense EfficientNetB0	output:		(None, 7, 7, 1280)				
		input:		(None, 7, 7, 1280)				
		output:		(None, 62720)				
			input:		(None, 62720)			
		output:		(None, 30)				
Fig. 6. Baseline model architecture								
		input:		[(None, 224, 224, 3)]				
		output:		(None, 7, 7, 1280)				
	conv2d 74	input:		(None, 7, 7, 1280)				
	Conv2D		output:		(None, 5, 5, 128)			
	global average pooling2d input:			(None, 5, 5, 128)				
	GlobalAveragePooling2D		output:		(None, 128)			
	dense 17		input:		(None, 128)			
	Dense		output:	(None, 256)				
	dropout_5				(None, 256)			
	Dropout		input: output:		(None, 256)			
	dense 18	input:		(None, 256)				
	Dense	output:		(None, 128)				
	dropout 6	input:		(None, 128)				
	Dropout		output:	(None, 128)				
	dense 19	input:		(None, 128)				
	Dense		output:		(None, 30)			

Fig. 7. The architecture of the SimpliScopeX model

At this stage, hyperparameter tuning is also carried out, and the optimizer function is determined. The hyperparameters used during model training are detailed in Table 3. Since this study is a multiclass classification task and the class labels were encoded during preprocessing, categorical crossentropy was used as the loss function. Adaptive Moment Estimation (Adam) is the optimization approach used in this study. The weighted network is iteratively updated using Adam's optimization algorithm instead of the conventional stochastic gradient descent (SGD) method based on training data.

In addition, it is also necessary to pay attention to the callback function when carrying out the training process. Table 4 shows the details of the parameters in the callbacks used.

Figure 1 depicts the improved deep learning model's deep learning layers. This model is built on a modified EfficientNetB0 architecture with additional layers such as Conv2D, GlobalAveragePooling2D, Dense, and Dropout. The Dropout layer prevents overfitting by eliminating some neurons' contributions to the following layer while leaving all others alone. The hyperparameter model configuration in Table 4 is used for the training process on the Baseline and the SimpliscopeX model. Figure 7 depicts a detailed architectural SimpliScopeX model.

Table 5 is the callback function used in this study, both the Baseline and the SimpliscopeX Model. Several callback functions have been installed: CSV Logger, Model Checkpoint, EarlyStopping, and ReduceLROnPlateau.

The CSV Logger function records the training results for each epoch in .csv format to make evaluating the model's performance easier during training. Model Checkpoint saves the model or weight (in the checkpoint file) at specific intervals so that the model or weight can be loaded later to continue training from the saved state. Early Stopping functions stop the training process when the monitored metrics do not improve. ReduceLROnPlateau works to reduce the learning rate when the metrics do not improve. The ReduceLROnPlateau callback is one of the issues that need to be tested to determine how much impact the use of the callback has. Table 6 shows a scenario comparison between the baseline model and the SimpliScopeX model.

Table 5

Table 6

Scenario differences between the Baseline Model and the Simpliscope Model

2.4 Evaluation Procedure

The most commonly used measures among the several performance indicators for multi-label classification issues are precision, recall, accuracy, and F-measure. It can be done using the classification report function from *the scikit-learn* library. Precision is the ratio of true positives to the total of false positives and true negatives, also known as positive predictive value. The mathematical equation of precision is shown in Eq. (1).

$$
Precision(P) = \frac{True \ Positive (TP)}{(True \ Positive (TP) + False \ Positive (FP))}
$$
\n(1)

The recall is the proportion of positives our model can detect by labeling them as positives, also known as true positive rate. The mathematical equation of precision is shown in Eq. (2).

Recall (R) =
$$
\frac{True \ Positive \ (TP)}{(True \ Positive \ (TP) + False \ Negative \ (FN))}
$$
 (2)

The harmonic mean of accuracy and recall is used to determine the F1 score, also known as Fmeasure. The F1 score reaches its best score at one and worst value at 0. The formula for F1 score is shown in Eq. (3).

 $F1 \text{ Score} = 2 * \frac{(\text{Recall} * \text{ Precision})}{(\text{Recall} + \text{Precision})}$ $(Recall + Precision)$

Accuracy is defined as the ratio of correct predictions out of all predictions obtained by the algorithm. The equation of accuracy is shown in Eq. (4).

$$
Accuracy = \frac{True \ Positive \ (TP) + True \ Negative \ (TN)}{TP + FP + FN + TN}
$$
\n
$$
(4)
$$

3. Results

The device specifications used in this study are the Windows 11 64-bit operating system, 16 GB RAM, with an AMD Ryzen 9 processor running on Nvidia T4 GPU at Google Colaboratory. This study used Google Colaboratory, which an Nvidia T4 GPU runs. This research also uses the TensorFlow library version 2.9.0. Several of the outcomes obtained include:

3.1 Baseline Model

Figure 8 shows (a) the training results and (b) validation accuracy, as well as the values derived from the dataset loss function, by using the base model with the EfficientNetB0 model architecture. The Baseline model configuration has been set for 50 epochs, but when the training process takes place, it stops at the 16th epoch because the EarlyStopping function works. EarlyStopping functions to stop the training process when the monitored metrics do not improve. EarlyStopping will be called in this study if the validation accuracy does not increase by ten epochs with a minimum change in the monitored quantity to qualify as an increase of 0.001.
 $T_{\text{Training Loss & Validation Loss}}$

Fig. 8. Training (a) Loss Metrics from Baseline Model, (b) Accuracy Metrics from Baseline Model

Figure 9 displays the outcomes of this deep learning modeling, which were then assessed using test data by the classification report() function from the scikit-learn package.

(3)

	precision	recall	f1-score	support
katuk-bp	0.26	0.60	0.36	40
katuk-ea dg palisade	0.57	0.30	0.39	40
katuk-ea dg stomata	0.48	0.38	0.42	40
katuk-eb	0.32	0.30	0.31	40
katuk-parenkim d kko b roset	0.42	0.35	0.38	40
keji beling-bp	0.61	0.35	0.44	40
keji beling-ea	0.49	0.82	0.61	40
keji beling-ea dg litosit d stomata	0.42	0.70	0.53	40
keji beling-rp	0.53	0.80	0.64	40
keji beling-sistolit	0.53	0.75	0.62	40
kelor-bp t tangga	0.86	0.15	0.26	40
kelor-eb dg stomata	0.43	0.75	0.55	40
kelor-kko b roset	0.54	0.33	0.41	40
kelor-m bp dg pt tangga d kko b roset	0.50	0.47	0.49	40
kelor-m dg selsekresi	0.47	0.47	0.48	40
pegagan-bp	0.54	0.65	0.59	40
pegagan-ea	0.57	0.57	0.57	40
pegagan-eb dg stomata	0.55	0.40	0.46	40
pegagan-mesofil	0.49	0.50	0.49	40
pegagan-uratdaun dg kko b roset	0.55	0.28	0.37	40
salam-ea	1.00	0.45	0.62	40
salam-eb dg stomata	0.80	0.88	0.83	40
salam-kko b prisma	0.64	0.80	0.71	40
salam-sklerenkim	0.38	0.42	0.40	40
salam-unsurxilem dg noktah	0.75	0.07	0.14	40
sereh-e_dg_parenkim	0.95	0.53	0.68	40
sereh-ea d bp dg p t tangga	0.62	0.45	0.52	40
sereh-ea dg selpalisade d rp	0.73	0.90	0.81	40
sereh-ea dg stomata b halter	0.82	0.78	0.79	40
sereh-sklerenkim	0.57	0.80	0.67	40
accuracy			0.53	1200
macro avg	0.58	0.53	0.52	1200
weighted avg	0.58	0.53	0.52	1200

Fig. 9. Classification report from baseline model

The last epoch's training accuracy and validation accuracy results were 71.24% and 52.11%, respectively, with the most excellent validation accuracy at 52.20%. For the test data, the model's accuracy was 53.33%.

3.2. SimpliScopeX Model

Fig. 10. Training (a) Loss Metrics from SimpliScopeX Model, (b) Accuracy Metrics from SimpliScopeX Model

Figure 10 shows (a) the training and (b) validation accuracy outcomes and the values obtained from the dataset's loss function after applying the modified and improved model. Figure 11 displays the outcomes of this deep learning modeling, which were then assessed using test data by the classification report() function of the scikit-learn package. The training process was successfully carried out for 50 epochs because the EarlyStopping function was not called. This was because the accuracy validation continued to increase and met the minimum increase requirements.

	precision		recall f1-score	support
katuk-bp	0.69	0.62	0.66	40
katuk-ea dg palisade	0.69	0.62	0.66	40
katuk-ea dg stomata	0.70	0.78	0.74	40
katuk-eb	0.66	0.68	0.67	40
katuk-parenkim d kko b roset	0.47	0.45	0.46	40
keji beling-bp	0.82	0.57	0.68	40
keji beling-ea	0.86	0.93	0.89	40
keji_beling-ea_dg_litosit_d stomata	0.80	0.80	0.80	40
keji beling-rp	0.95	0.93	0.94	40
keji beling-sistolit	0.84	0.93	0.88	40
kelor-bp t tangga	0.71	0.75	0.73	40
kelor-eb dg stomata	0.88	0.88	0.88	40
kelor-kko b roset	0.76	0.62	0.68	40
kelor-m bp dg pt tangga d kko b roset	0.66	0.62	0.64	40
kelor-m dg selsekresi	0.61	0.78	0.68	40
pegagan-bp	0.79	0.95	0.86	40
pegagan-ea	0.88	0.90	0.89	40
pegagan-eb_dg_stomata	0.95	0.90	0.92	40
pegagan-mesofil	0.78	0.80	0.79	40
pegagan-uratdaun_dg_kko_b_roset	0.80	0.80	0.80	40
salam-ea	0.92	0.85	0.88	40
salam-eb_dg_stomata	0.91	0.97	0.94	40
salam-kko b prisma	0.89	0.80	0.84	40
salam-sklerenkim	0.87	0.68	0.76	40
salam-unsurxilem dg noktah	0.67	0.80	0.73	40
sereh-e dg parenkim	0.95	0.95	0.95	40
sereh-ea d bp dg p t tangga	0.86	0.95	0.90	40
sereh-ea_dg_selpalisade_d_rp	0.95	0.95	0.95	40
sereh-ea dg stomata b halter	0.97	0.90	0.94	40
sereh-sklerenkim	0.86	0.93	0.89	40
accuracy			0.80	1200
macro avg	0.81	0.80	0.80	1200
weighted avg	0.81	0.80	0.80	1200

Fig. 11. Classification report from SimpliScopeX model

The last epoch's training accuracy and validation accuracy results were 93.97% and 74.49%, respectively, with the best validation accuracy at 74.75%. For the test data, the model's accuracy was 80.25%.

4. Conclusions

In this proposed paper, we discuss developing and optimizing a deep learning model to solve microscopic image identification cases of simplicia fragments of medicinal plant leaves using the EfficientNetB0 architecture as the basic model. Our model is based on the fine-tuning and modification of EfficientNetB0 architectures using different model training strategies, which, fused in a final result, gains higher performance than the baseline model.

Various efforts have been made to develop and improve model performance in order to improve the model, such as using different data augmentation techniques, modifying and adding layers to the EfficientNetB0 architecture, using the Adam optimization algorithm, and using various callback functions, such as ReduceLROnPlateau. The deep learning model architecture that has been developed also automates the feature extraction process.

The dataset has been separated into three portions with weights of 60:20:20, with training data accounting for 60%, validation data accounting for 20%, and testing data accounting for 20% of the overall data set. The baseline model could only provide an accuracy of 53.33% of the test data and training and validation accuracy gained in the training phase in the latest epoch, which was 71.24% and 52.11%, respectively. With an accuracy of 80.25% of the test data, the created SimpliScopeX model can solve the classification problem successfully. The training and validation accuracy obtained in the latest epoch was 93.97% and 74.49%, respectively. As a result, the SimpliScopeX model outperforms the baseline model in terms of accuracy.

The research development direction can be carried out further by increasing the variety of datasets, using other pre-trained model architectures, and experimenting with different image processing and image data augmentation techniques. The results of the model that has been built can be applied in the form of an application so that it can facilitate work in identifying the type and classification of microscopic fragments of simplicia of medicinal plants.

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