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# Automated Attendance System Using Face Recognition

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**ABSTRACT:** Face identification has been considered an interesting research domain in the past few years as it plays a major biometric authentication role in several applications including attendance management and access control systems. Attendance management systems are very important to all organization though they are complex and time-consuming for managing regular attendance log. There are many automated human identification techniques such as biometrics, RFID, eye tracking, voice recognition. Face is one of the most broadly used biometrics for human identity authentication. This paper presents a facial recognition attendance system based on deep learning convolutional neural networks. We utilize transfer learning by using three pre-trained convolutional neural networks and trained them on our data. The three networks showed very high performance in terms of high prediction accuracy and reasonable training time.

**KEYWORDS:** Machine Learning , Deep Learning , video module , OpenCV

## I. INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this project is to develop face recognition based automated student attendance system. In order to achieve better performance, the test images and training images of this proposed approach are limited to frontal and upright facial images that consist of a single face only. The test images and training images have to be captured by using the same device to ensure no quality difference. In addition, the students have to register in the database to be recognized. The enrolment can be done on the spot through the user-friendly interface.

## II. BACKGROUND

Face recognition is crucial in daily life in order to identify family, friends or someone we are familiar with. We might not perceive that several steps have actually taken in order to identify human faces. Human intelligence allows us to receive information and interpret the information in the recognition process. We receive information through the image projected into our eyes, by specifically retina in the form of light. Light is a form of electromagnetic waves which are radiated from a source onto an object and projected to human vision. Robinson-Riegler, G., & Robinson-Riegler, B. (2008) mentioned that after visual processing done by the human visual system, we actually classify shape, size, contour and the texture of the object in order to analyse the information. The analysed information will be compared to other representations of objects or face that exist in our memory to recognize. In fact, it is a hard challenge to build an automated system to have the same capability as a human to recognize faces. However, we need large memory to recognize different faces, for example, in the Universities, there are a lot of students with different race and gender, it is impossible to remember every face of the individual without making mistakes. In order to overcome human limitations, computers with almost limitless memory, high processing speed and power are used in face recognition systems. The human face is a unique representation of individual identity. Thus, face recognition is defined as a biometric method in which identification of an individual is performed by comparing real-time capture image with stored images in the database of that person (Margaret Rouse, 2012). Nowadays, face recognition system is prevalent due to its simplicity and awesome performance.

For instance, airport protection systems and FBI use face recognition for criminal investigations by tracking suspects, missing children and drug activities (Robert Silk, 2017). Apart from that, Facebook which is a popular social networking website implement face recognition to allow the users to tag their friends in the photo for entertainment

purposes (Sidney Fussell, 2018). Furthermore, Intel Company allows the users to use face recognition to get access to their online account (Reichert, C., 2017). Apple allows the users to unlock their mobile phone, iPhone X by using face recognition (deAgonia, M., 2017). The work on face recognition began in 1960. Woody Bledsoe, Helen Chan Wolf and Charles Bisson had introduced a system which required the administrator to locate eyes, ears, nose and mouth from images. The distance and ratios between the located features and the common reference points are then calculated and compared. The studies are further enhanced by Goldstein, Harmon, and Lesk in 1970 by using other features such as hair colour and lip thickness to automate the recognition. In 1988, Kirby and Sirovich first suggested principle component analysis (PCA) to solve face recognition problem. Many studies on face recognition were then conducted continuously until today (Ashley DuVal, 2012).

### III. THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

Traditional student attendance marking technique is often facing a lot of trouble. The face recognition student attendance system emphasizes its simplicity by eliminating classical student attendance marking technique such as calling student names or checking respective identification cards. There are not only disturbing the teaching process but also causes distraction for students during exam sessions. Apart from calling names, attendance sheet is passed around the classroom during the lecture sessions. The lecture class especially the class with a large number of students might find it difficult to have the attendance sheet being passed around the class. Thus, face recognition student attendance system is proposed in order to replace the manual signing of the presence of students which are burdensome and causes students get distracted in order to sign for their attendance. Furthermore, the face recognition based automated student attendance system able to overcome the problem of fraudulent approach and lecturers does not have to count the number of students several times to ensure the presence of the students. The paper proposed by Zhao, W et al. (2003) has listed the difficulties of facial identification. One of the difficulties of facial identification is the identification between known and unknown images. In addition, paper proposed by Pooja G.R et al. (2010) found out that the training process for face recognition student attendance system is slow and time-consuming. In addition, the paper proposed by Priyanka Wagh et al. (2015) mentioned that different lighting and head poses are often the problems that could degrade the performance of face recognition based student attendance system. Hence, there is a need to develop a real time operating student attendance system which means the identification process must be done within defined time constraints to prevent omission. The extracted features from facial images which represent the identity of the students have to be consistent towards a change in background, illumination, pose and expression. High accuracy and fast computation time will be the evaluation points of the performance.

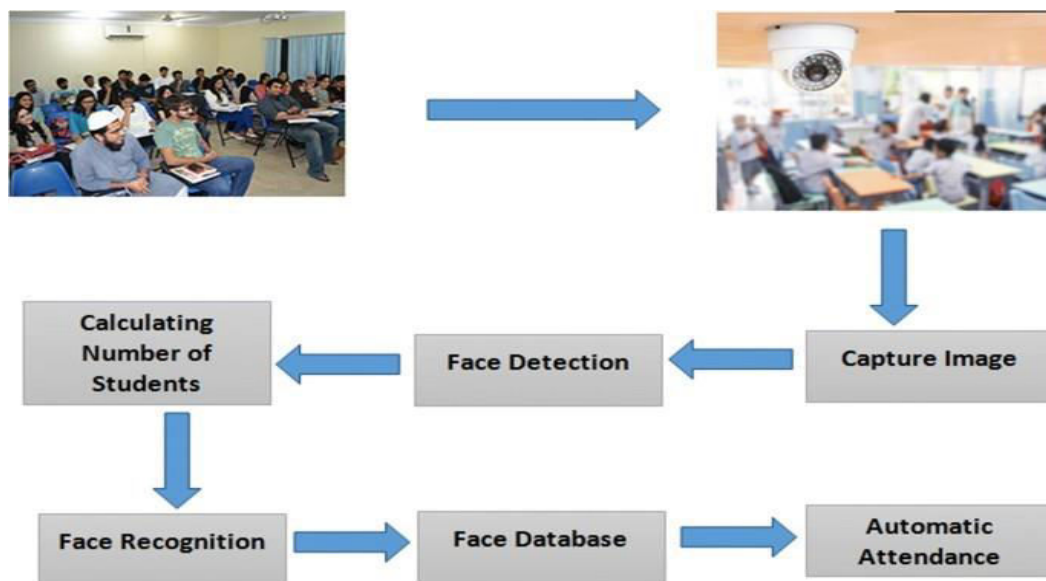


Figure1. Face Recognition System Workflow.

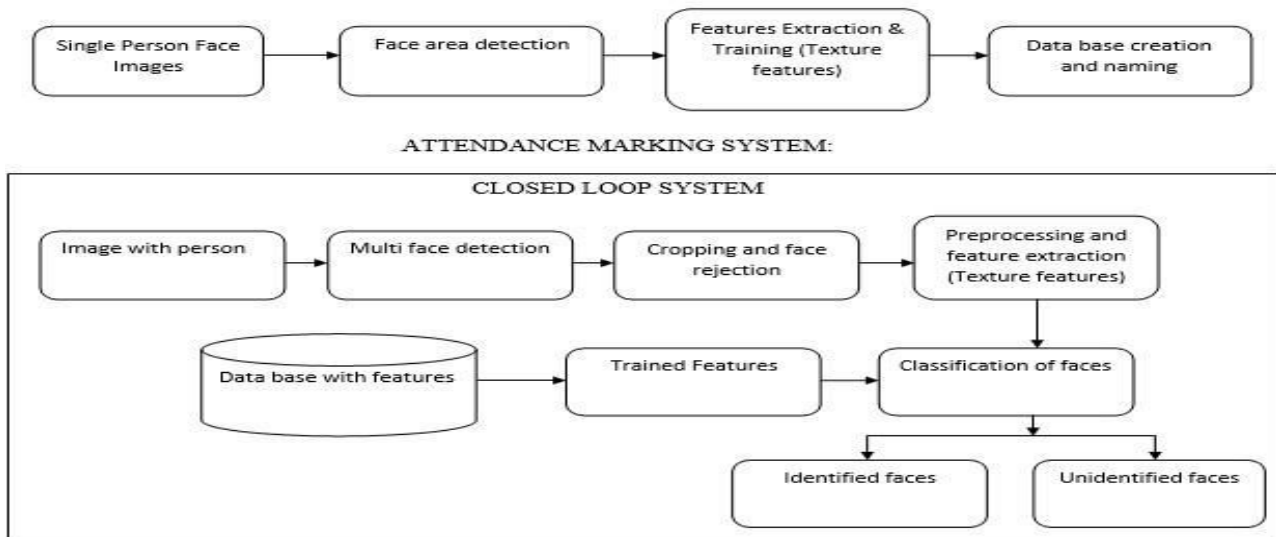


Figure2. Uniquely identifying the faces.

#### IV. PROPOSED WORKING PRINCIPLE

The approach performs face recognition based student attendance system. The methodology flow begins with the capture of image by using simple and handy interface, followed by pre-processing of the captured facial images, then feature extraction from the facial images, subjective selection and lastly classification of the facial images to be recognized. Both LBP and PCA feature extraction methods are studied in detail and computed in this proposed approach in order to make comparisons. LBP is enhanced in this approach to reduce the illumination effect. An algorithm to combine enhanced LBP and PCA is also designed for subjective selection in order to increase the accuracy. The details of each stage will be discussed in the following sections. The flow chart for the proposed system is categorized into two parts, first training of images followed by testing images (recognize the unknown input image).

##### Input Images

Although our own database should be used to design real time face recognition student attendance system, the databases that are provided by the previous researchers are also used to design the system more effectively, efficiently and for evaluation purposes. Yale face database is used as both training set and testing set to evaluate the performance. Yale face database contains one hundred and sixty-five grayscale images of fifteen individuals. There are eleven images per individual; each image of the individual is in different condition. The conditions included centre-light, with glasses, happy, left-light, without glasses, normal, right-light, sad, sleepy, surprised and wink. These different variations provided by the database is able to ensure the system to be operated consistently in variety of situations and conditions. Each student provided four images, two for training set and two for testing set. The images captured by using laptop built in camera are categorized as low quality images, whereas mobile phone camera captured images are categorized as high quality images. The high quality images consists of seventeen students while low quality images consists of twenty-six students. The recognition rate of low quality images and high quality images will be compared in Chapter 4 to draw a conclusion in terms of performance between image sets of different quality.



Figure3.1 Sample Images in Yale Face Database

### Limitations of the Images

The input image for the proposed approach has to be frontal, upright and only a single face. Although the system is designed to be able to recognize the student with glasses and without glasses, student should provide both facial images with and without glasses to be trained to increase the accuracy to be recognized without glasses. The training image and testing image should be captured by using the same device to avoid quality difference. The students have to register in order to be recognized. The enrolment can be done on the spot through the user-friendly interface.

### FACE DETECTION STEPS

Viola-Jones object detection framework will be used to detect the face from the video camera recording frame. The working principle of Viola-Jones algorithm is mentioned in Chapter 2. The limitation of the Viola-Jones framework is that the facial image has to be a frontal upright image, the face of the individual must point towards the camera in a video frame.

### Pre-processing

Testing set and training set images are captured using a camera. There are unwanted noise and uneven lighting exists in the images. Therefore, several pre-processing steps are necessary before proceeding to feature extraction. Pre-processing steps that would be carried out include scaling of image, median filtering, conversion of colour images to grayscale images and adaptive histogram equalization. The details of these steps would be discussed in the later sections.

### Scaling of Image

Scaling of images is one of the frequent tasks in image processing. The size of the images has to be carefully manipulated to prevent loss of spatial information. (Gonzalez, R.C., & Woods, 2008). In order to perform face recognition, the size of the image has to be equalized. This has become crucial, especially in the feature extraction process, the test images and training images have to be in the same size and dimension to ensure the precise outcome. Thus, in this proposed approach test images and train images are standardized to size 250 x 250 pixels.

### Median Filtering

Median filtering is a robust noise reduction method. It is widely used in various applications due to its capability to remove unwanted noise as well as retaining useful detail in images. Since the colour images captured by using a camera are RGB images, median filtering is done on three different channels of the image. Figure 3.3 shows the image before and after noise removal by median filtering in three channels. If the input image is a grayscale image, then the median filtering can be performed directly without separating the channels.



Figure 3.2 Median Filtering Done on Three Channels

### Conversion to Grey Scale Image

Camera captures color images, however the proposed contrast improvement method CLAHE can only be performed on grayscale images. After improving the contrast, the illumination effect of the images can be reduced. LBP extracts the grayscale features from the contrast-improved images as an 8-bit texture descriptor (Ojala, T. et al., 2002). Therefore, color images have to be converted to grayscale images before proceeding to the later steps. By

converting color images to grayscale images, the complexity of the computation can be reduced resulting in higher speed of computation (Kananand Cottrell,



Figure 3.4 Conversion of Image to Gray scale Image

### Contrast Limited Adaptive Histogram Equalization

Histogram equalization or histogram stretching is a technique of image contrast enhancement. (Pratiksha M. Patel, 2016). The contrast improvement is usually performed on the grayscale images. Image contrast is improved by stretching the range of its pixel intensity values to span over the desired range of values, between 0 and 255 in grayscale. The reason that Contrast Limited Adaptive Histogram Equalization (CLAHE) is used instead of histogram equalization is because histogram equalization depends on the global statistics. Hence, it causes over enhancement of some parts of image while other parts are not enhanced properly. This distorts the features of the image. It is a serious issue because the features of the image have to be extracted for the face recognition. Thus, CLAHE which is depend on local statistic is used.



Fig 3.5 increasing the image quality

### Feature Extraction

Different facial images mean there are changes in textural or geometric information. In order to perform face recognition, these features have to be extracted from the facial images and classified appropriately. In this project, enhanced LBP and PCA are used for face recognition. The idea comes from nature of human visual perception which performs face recognition depending on the local statistic and global statistic features. Enhanced LBP extracts the local grayscale features by performing feature extraction on a small region throughout the entire image. On the other hand, PCA extracts the global grayscale features which means feature extraction is performed on the whole image.

### Working Principle of Original LBP

LBP is basically a texture based descriptor which it encoded local primitive into binary string. (Timo Ojala et al., 2002). The original LBP operator works on a  $3 \times 3$  mask size.  $3 \times 3$  mask size contains 9 pixels. The center pixel will be used as a threshold to convert the neighboring pixels (the other 8 pixels) into binary digit. If the neighboring pixel value is larger than the center pixel value, then it is assigned to 1, otherwise it is assigned to 0. After that, the neighborhoods pixel bits are concatenated to a binary code to form a byte value representing the center pixel. Figure 3.6 shows an example of LBP conversion.

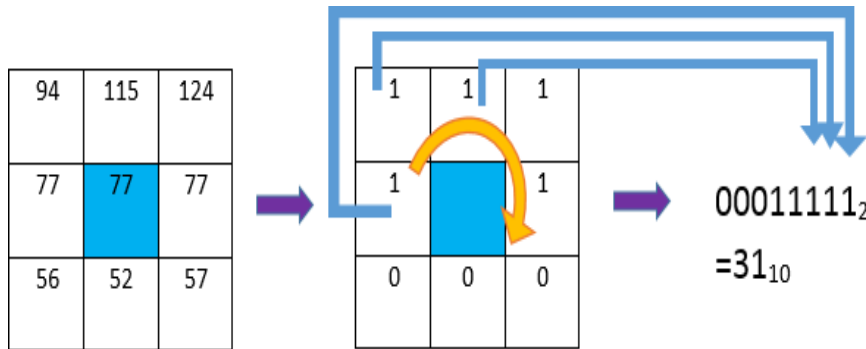


Figure3.6 Example of LBP Conversion

**Working Principal of Proposed LBP**

The original LBP operator is composed of  $3 \times 3$  filter size with 9 pixels. Instead of the circular pattern, it looks more rectangular in shape. The 9 pixels adjacent to each other means every detail will be taken as sampling points even the non-essential details. It is more affected by uneven lighting condition because the small filter size emphasizes small scale detail (Lee and Li, 2007), even the shadow created by non-uniform lighting condition. In our proposed approach, a larger radius size, R is implemented in LBP operator. In the paper of Md. Abdur Rahim et.al (2013), the equation of modifying the radius size has been introduced. However, the paper did not mention the effect of changing the radius size. In the proposed approach, analysis is done on different radius sizes in order to enhance the system and reduce the illumination effect. By increasing the radius size, the filter size will be increased. R indicates radius from the centre pixel,  $\theta$  indicates the angle of the sampling point with respect to the center pixel and P indicates number of sampling points on the edge of the circle taken to compare with the centre pixel. Given the neighbouring notation (P, R,  $\theta$ ) is implemented, the coordinates of the centre pixel ( $X_c, Y_c$ ) and the coordinates of the P neighbours ( $X_p, Y_p$ ) on the edge of the circle with radius R can be computed with the sines and cosines shown in the equation (Md. Abdur Rahim et.al, 2013):

$$(3.3) \quad X_p = X_c + R \cos(\theta/P) \quad Y_p = Y_c + R \sin(\theta/P)$$

Although the radius has been increased, total 8 sampling points are taken which is similar to the original LBP operator. In the approach, CLAHE is performed on the grayscale input facial images to improve the contrast. The contrast improved images remain as grayscale images. The proposed LBP operator extracts the grayscale features from the contrast improved grayscale images which requires only 8 bit computation. After that, the pixels at the sampling points will be encoded as 8 bit binary string in the same way as original LBP operator encoding process. Enhanced LBP with radius size two, performs better compared to original LBP and has more consistent recognition rate compared to other radius size. Hence, enhanced LBP with radius size two will be used as proposed approach.

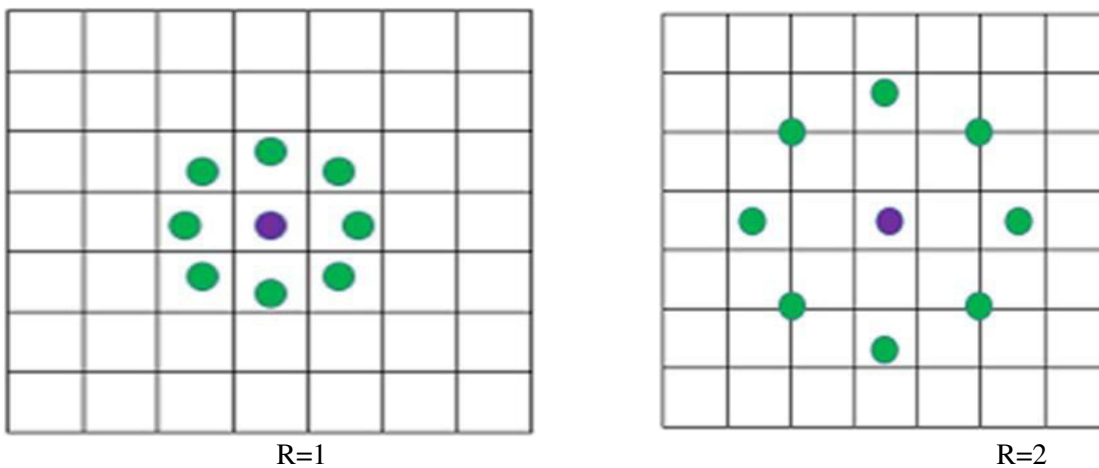


Figure 3.7 LBP with Different Radius Sizes

The feature vector of the image is constructed after the Local Binary Pattern of every pixel is calculated. The histogram of the feature vector image is computed in order to be classified by distance classifier. However, it loses spatial information because histogram representation does not include spatial information but only discrete information. (Gonzalez, R. C., & Woods, 2008). In order to overcome this problem, the feature vector image is then divided into blocks. A histogram is constructed in each region respectively. Every bin in a histogram represents a pattern and contains the frequency of its appearance in the region. The feature vector of the entire image is then constructed by concatenating the regional histograms in this sequence to one histogram. (Md. Abdur Rahim et al., 2013). This histogram remains its regional spatial information and represents the identity of a single image which is then classified to perform the recognition.

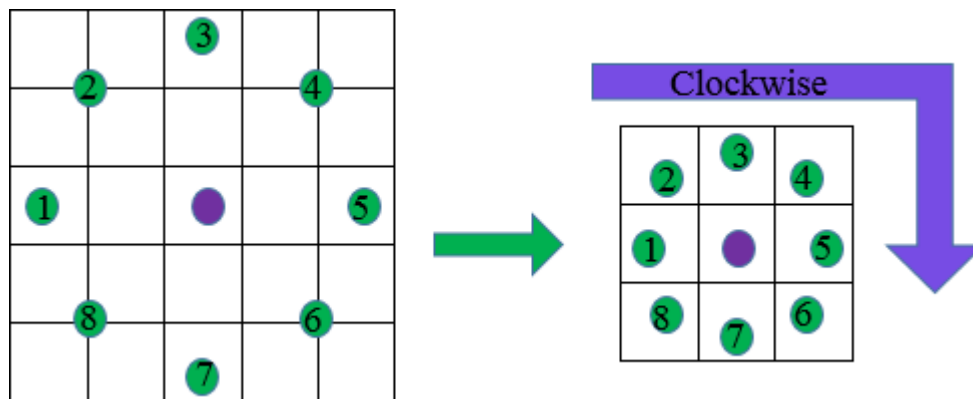


Figure 3.8 Proposed LBP Operator with Radius 2 and its Encoding Pattern

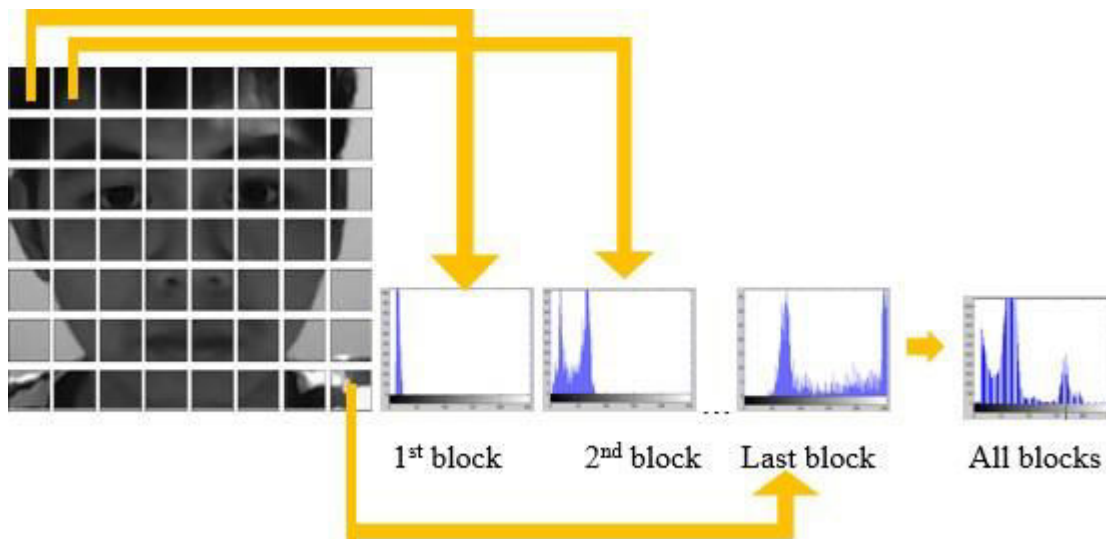


Figure 3.9 Histogram of Image Blocks

### Working principle of PCA

In this proposed approach, PCA face recognition is studied, as it is one of the popular face recognition methods that was suggested and used by the previous researchers. The accuracy of PCA is computed in order to compare with the enhanced LBP. PCA includes a few steps which will briefly be described in the following paragraphs. For PCA, the image scale, length ( $M$ ) and height ( $M$ ) is not so important. This is because PCA is mostly dealing with number of total images,  $N$  instead of  $M$ . However, same size of test image and training image is a must for PCA computation. Same length and height of the image is assumed in the following equation for illustration. Given a training set of  $N$  images with size  $M \times M$ , the first step of PCA is to convert two dimensional vectors to one dimensional vector. The one dimensional vector can be either column vector or row vector. In this approach, the column vector conversion is done. For each facial image with matrix notation  $M \times M$  will be converted to column vector  $\Gamma_i$ , with dimension  $M^2 \times$



1. There are  $N$  facial images, each face is represented by column vector. Feature vector of each face is stored in this column vector. The dimension reduced face matrix is constructed by concatenating every single column vector. PCA is briefly explained by using the equation in the following steps:

Step 1: Prepare the data

Step 2: Obtain the mean/average face vector. Next, the average face vector which is also known as mean face is calculated. The mean is computed row by row between the column vectors. The equation of mean face

Step 3: Subtract the mean/average face vector. In order to ensure the image data is centred at the origin, the mean face is subtracted from each column vector.

Step 4: Calculate the covariance matrix

The purpose of covariance matrix to be constructed is to compute the eigenvectors and eigenvalues. However,  $AA^T$  have dimension  $M^2 \times M^2$  which is extremely large to be calculated.  $AA^T$  and  $A^T A$  have the same eigenvalues,  $\lambda$  and their eigenvectors can be related as  $u_i = Av_i$ . Hence  $A^T A$  which have dimension  $N \times N$  is calculated instead of  $AA^T$  because  $N \ll M^2$ , less computational time is required.

Step 5: Calculate the eigenvectors and eigenvalues from the covariance matrix. Step 6: Projection of facial image to Eigenface.

The facial image is projected on the Eigen face by using the equation to obtain the projected image  $\Omega \cdot \Gamma_i - \phi$  is the centered vector, which the mean face is removed. Steps 1 to 6 are used to train the training image set. For test image only step 1, 2, 3 and 6 is required. Step 4 and 5 are not required for test image as the Eigen face is needed only to compute once while training. The Euclidean distance is then used as distance classifier to calculate the shortest distance between the projected image and projected test image for recognition.

### Feature Classification

Chi-square statistic is used as a dissimilarity measure for LBP to determine the shortest distance between training image and the testing image. On the other hand, Euclidean distance is used to compute the shortest distance between trained and test image after PCA feature extraction. Both classifiers, Chi-square statistic and Euclidean distance determine the closest or nearest possible training image to the testing image for face recognition. However, the nearest result might not be always true. Therefore, an algorithm to combine enhanced LBP and PCA is applied in order to increase the accuracy of the system.

### Subjective Selection Algorithm and Face Recognition

The feature classification that has been performed in previous part gives the closest result but not absolute. In order to increase the accuracy and suppress the false recognition rate, an algorithm to combine enhanced LBP and PCA is designed in this proposed approach. In this proposed approach, best five results are obtained from enhanced LBP and PCA. This means that five individuals which have closest distance with respect to input image will be identified. LBP and PCA are two different algorithms which have a different working principle. Hence, LBP and PCA will not have exactly the same five individuals identified. In order to ensure the system capability to suppress the false recognition, one is only classified as recognized if and only if he or she is the first common individual that is identified by both LBP and PCA. From chapter 2, LBP shows higher accuracy compared to PCA. Thus, LBP is designed to have higher priority compared to PCA. This is shown in the Figure 3.14, Student\_1 is recognized instead of Student\_3 because LBP is prioritized. As a result, the first common individual is selected from PCA with respect to LBP and classified as recognized. If there is no common term between LBP and PCA then the system will not recognize any subject. This subjective selection algorithm is designed to be automated in the system.

## IV. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

All kinds of organisations need a robust attendance system to ensure the efficiency of all the operations. Maintenance of accurate attendance records of students and employees in schools can help handle discrepancies and disparities. Present-day, technology has leveraged everything by automation. Manual processes for taking attendance are quite insufficient. There is a huge scope of errors in data. Smart attendance software with unique biometric features is the best way to mark attendance.

A smart attendance system allows you to enhance the organization ethics. The software uses biometric such as fingerprint, facial, and iris recognition to detect the presence of an individual and mark the attendance. The information is maintained in the database and you can easily obtain the results.

Some of the benefits of using smart attendance software are:

1. **Track in real-time:** The school administration can keep a tab on the student and employee attendance in real-

- time and further inspect if they find any variations.
2. **Reduced errors:** Digital attendance systems such as finger attendance help in providing unique and accurate results. Human intervention is highly reduced. So there are fewer chances of redundant errors.
  3. **Easily manage large volumes of data:** Schools with huge students and employees can easily manage the huge amount of data using smart attendance software. All the records are stored in highly-robust databases and can be easily accessed whenever required.
  4. **Highly secure:** The smart attendance systems require biometrics which is unique for every person. Therefore there is complete confidentiality of all the records. No one can tamper the information stored in the database. Thus strong authentication and security are the added advantages of smart attendance software.

Generate Reports: The admin of the school can easily login to the software and check the attendance details. He/she can easily find out when the students and employees logged-in and logged-out of the system. You can check the count of absent students and take the right remedial action.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

This system aims to build an effective class attendance system using face recognition techniques. The proposed system will be able to mark the attendance via face ID. It will detect faces via webcam and then recognize the faces. After recognition, it will mark the attendance of the recognized student and update the attendance record.

Things to keep in mind before using this system :

1. If the resolution of the said image is not high enough, it can cause cameras to be tricked into believing that the person being scanned is not the same as in the photo
2. a system would need an appropriate amount of storage
3. Many non-premium facial recognition systems cannot account for faces that are captured at angles other than straight into the capturing camera. The disadvantage of this is that it makes the attendance marking process slower and less efficient

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