

# Cattle weight prediction model using convolutional neural network and artificial neural network

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## ABSTRACT

The weight of livestock is a crucial metric for evaluating management efficacy, informing policy decisions, and determining the market value of animals. In certain scenarios, conventional methods such as physical weighing and measurement calculations can prove challenging, including the absence of livestock health records or weighing equipment. This research aims to develop a predictive model for estimating the live weight of cattle through visual assessments and metadata, including age and pixel count, utilizing a combination of convolutional neural network (CNN) and artificial neural network (ANN) methodologies. A total of 223 data were obtained from a local farm before augmentation. The model's predictive capability was successfully demonstrated, with its performance quantified by an average mean absolute percentage error (MAPE) of 10% on test data. This study demonstrates that through the combination of CNN and ANN, as well as optimal parameter tuning, efficient prediction of cattle weight can be achieved.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The livestock subsector's ability to meet the demand for animal-sourced products is heavily influenced by management practices. In Indonesia, various livestock commodities are produced by Livestock Business Households (RTUP), with a notable increase of 4.56% from 2013 to 2018 [1]. A key indicator of successful livestock rearing is healthy weight gain. Regular weight measurements are essential for monitoring livestock development and assessing the impact of technological or management interventions. Several methods are currently used to estimate cattle weight. These include formulas based on physical dimensions like chest circumference [2] and body length or morphometrics [3], which are believed to correlate with weight. However, studies have shown that these formulas can deviate from actual weights [4]. Efforts to modify these formulas to suit different cattle breeds have not yielded a universal solution, largely due to variations in environmental factors, feeding practices, and the size and shape of the cattle [5], [6] including the lack of sufficiently comprehensive health records. Another method, direct weighing with scales, can yield more accurate results but poses risks of injury or stress to the animals, potentially leading to weight loss, and requires considerable labor to move the livestock to the weighing area.

The problem in this study is that to estimate the body weight of cattle, specifically Bali cattle, using data sourced from the characteristics of the cattle. Recent studies have explored the use of machine learning for measuring cattle weight. Several methods utilizing data sourced from measurements or morphometrics

have been extensively conducted. The application of an artificial neural network (ANN) using three algorithms-Levenberg-Marquart, Bayesian regularization, and scaled conjugate-has shown promising results, surpassing both multiple linear regression [7] and random forest (RF) [8], which still rely on morphometric data. On the other hand, research involving weight measurement using segmented visual data with multi-layer perceptron (MLP) and recurrent neural network (R-CNN) approaches has been successful [9], but these studies did not include additional information like age [10]. The capabilities of convolutional neural networks (CNN) [11] and computer vision [12], [13] offer solutions for issues based on visual observations. Digital observation with specific algorithms allows for easier and more accurate object recognition [14], [15]. Object detection, classification, and prediction are common applications of machine learning in computer vision data [16]. Both visual and measurement methods have their respective advantages. This research addresses the challenge of determining cattle weights through visual assessments and metadata, including age and pixel count, utilizing a combination of CNN and ANN. This study also extensively involves testing the fine-tuning of several parameters, including the configuration of dense layers, selection of activation functions, and determination of the best dropout rates which constitutes part of the innovation in this study.

**2. METHOD**

To answer the research objectives, a framework of thought was prepared as an outline of the logical flow of the research as shown in Figure 1. Data collection for this research involved gathering both image and morphometric data from the People’s Animal Husbandry School (SPR) Musi Banyuasin and local animal husbandry operations in Depok, West Java. The research focused on collecting images of cows from two perspectives: a side view or lateral covering the area from the head to the base of the tail, and a rear view focusing on the distance between the ischium. These views were chosen to assess potential meat deposition [17]. Additionally, morphometric data such as weight and age were gathered. Weight was used as a label in the study. In total, 223 images of cattle in side view and 223 in rear view were collected simultaneously to ensure accuracy in representing the actual conditions. While CNN architecture generally requires a large dataset, this is not a universal rule. For instance, in image classification, using 100 human brain images yielded an accuracy of 72.82%, whereas the same number of shoulder images resulted in an accuracy of 95.53% [18]. The sample dataset shown in Tables 1 and 2.

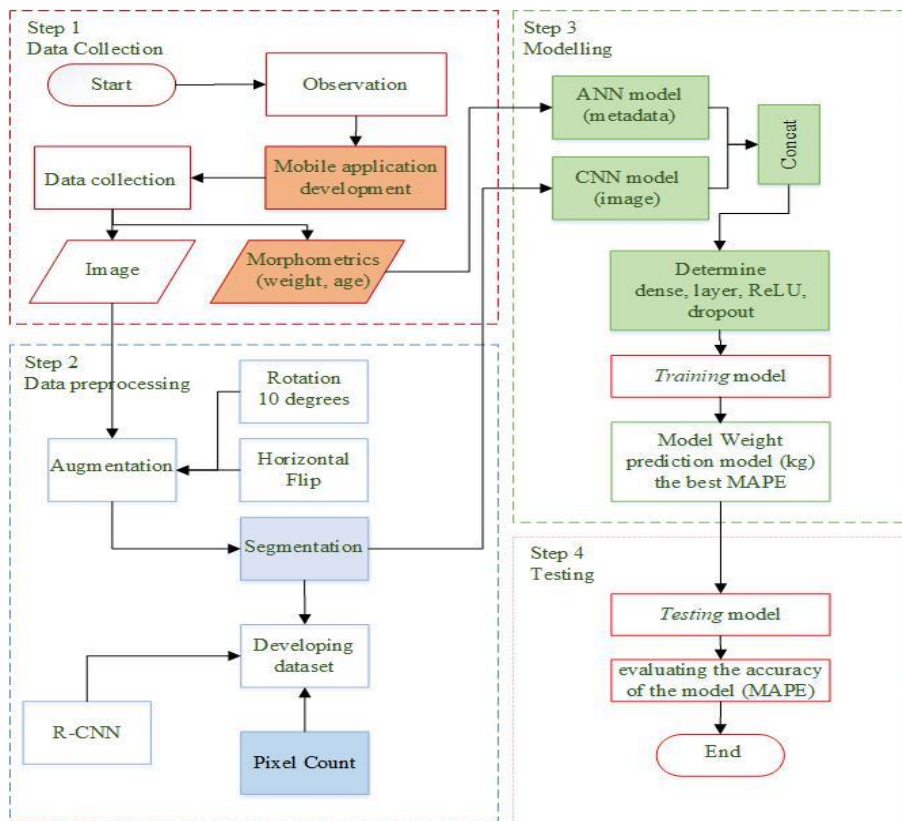


Figure 1. Research stages

Table 1. Dataset of cattle








ID	Weight	Age	Rear pix	Side pix	Rear view	Side view	Rear seg	Side seg
B4A01	196	12-24	29,394	92,349				
B4A05	244	25-36	188,454	110,706				
B4A20	248	25-36	123,108	133,998				
C1A08	168	37-48	38,160	76,212				
C1A24	182	12-24	168,327	206,982				
D026	255	37-48	91,590	156,420				
D136	247	49-60	51,498	113,949				
D148	327	49-60	113,415	167,127				
D180	367	37-48	65,523	131,880				

Table 2. Attribute dataset of cattle

No	Attribute	Description
1	ID	Id number, A-D indication of data location site
2	WEIGHT	Weight of the cattle is measured in kilograms.
3	AGE	Age data is obtained based on tooth growth
4	REAR_PIX	Pixel count from rear segmentation
5	SIDE_PIX	Pixel count from side segmentation
6	REAR_VIEW	Focusing on the distance between the ischium
7	SIDE_VIEW	Covering the area from the head to the base of the tail
8	REAR_SEG	Segmentation results from rear
9	SIDE_SEG	Segmentation results from side

The data collection process is detailed in Figure 2. The morphometric measurements were conducted using a digital scale, while age determination was based on tooth growth. Cattle specimens were captured from a distance of 220 cm with a camera height of 150 cm. The image capture employed 1:1 aspect ratio to facilitate the augmentation process.

Preprocessing phase, augmentation was conducted by rotating each image by 10 degrees and applying horizontal flipping to enhance model performance and prevent overfitting [19]. Subsequently, segmentation was performed, followed by pixel counting of the segmented areas [20]. The obtained results served as new inputs for the ANN algorithm as independent variables alongside age.

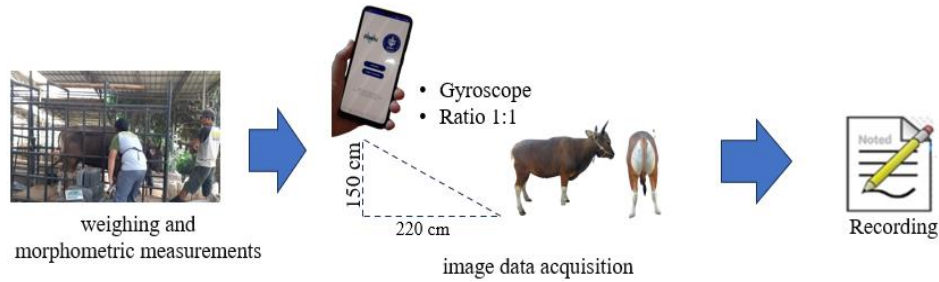


Figure 2. Data collection stage

It is noteworthy that there is no universally applicable segmentation approach, as certain methods have shown greater efficacy [21]. This study utilized R-Mask CNN for segmentation [22], which has proven to be effective in detection and layer generation [23], [24], compared to other methods such as multi-task network cascades (MNC) [25] and fully convolutional instance-aware semantic (FCIS) [26]. Algorithm 1 is the pseudocode used to perform pixel counting. In this pseudocode, the function CountPixels takes two parameters: mask\_template, which is the mask template, and target\_color, which is the color whose pixels we want to count. This function iterates through each pixel in mask\_template and counts the pixels that have the same color as target\_color. The result is then returned as pixel\_count. In the code, we call this function with mask\_template as the first argument and [122, 120, 24] as the second argument to count pixels with the color [122, 120, 24]. The result is then printed.

**Algorithm 1. Pseudocode used to perform pixel counting**

```
CountPixels(mask_template, target_color):
    pixel_count = 0
    for each pixel in mask_template:
        if pixel is equal to target_color:
            pixel_count = pixel_count + 1
    return pixel_count
# Calling the function to count pixels with a specific color
n_pixel = CountPixels(mask_template, [122, 120, 24])
print(n_pixel)
```

Modeling stage, an integration of two algorithms was implemented. The CNN was designated for the critical task of feature extraction from images, whereas the ANN was utilized to assimilate supplementary information such as the age and pixel count for each cow object. Concurrently, fine-tuning of several parameters, including the configuration of dense layers and selection of activation functions and determination of the best dropout rates. The model is implemented on both side and rearview image data to predict weight separately, and then the average value of both predictions is determined. This approach for constructing a weight prediction regression model was adapted and modified from the experimental model used in the International Skin Imaging Collaboration (ISIC) 2019 skin lesion classification challenge [27]. Testing and measuring the accuracy of the model based on the best mean absolute percentage error (MAPE) to examine the extent to which the model generalizes the prediction results and indicate how much error in predicting when compared to real or actual values. The optimal MAPE obtained from various parameter combinations will be recommended for the prediction of cattle weight.

$$MAPE = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n \left| \frac{A_i - F_i}{A_i} \right| \times 100\% \quad (1)$$

Where: n is sample size,  $A_i$  is the actual data value, and  $F_i$  is predicted value.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Preprocessing phase involved augmentation to expand the dataset to 892 instances. For training model data divided into 75:25. Subsequently, segmentation was conducted to calculate the pixel count of segmented objects. The number of pixels in each object represents the weight of the cattle. Table 3 illustrates the pixel counting results for each object. Furthermore, the results of pixel counting for each object serve as new inputs for the ANN algorithm to accompany the independent variable of age.

Modelling phase, an integration of two algorithms was implemented. the CNN was designated for the critical task of feature extraction from images, whereas the ANN was utilized to assimilate supplementary information such as the age and pixel count for each cattle object. This approach is particularly innovative in its use of the number of pixels from the images as a representation of a certain weight. This methodology leverages the visual data for a more accurate and comprehensive analysis, while the tabular data provides contextual and specific details, enhancing the overall predictive capability of the model. An illustration of the conceptual framework underpinning this research is provided in Figure 3, offering a visual representation of how these different data types are combined and utilized within the study.

Table 3. Pixel counting results

ID	Weight	Age	Rear pix	Side pix
B4A01	196	12-24	29,394	92,349
B4A05	244	25-36	188,454	110,706
B4A20	248	25-36	123,108	133,998
C1A08	168	37-48	38,160	76,212
C1A24	182	12-24	168,327	206,982
D026	255	37-48	91,590	156,420
D136	247	49-60	51,498	113,949
D148	327	49-60	113,415	167,127
...	...	...	...	...
D180	367	37-48	65,523	131,880

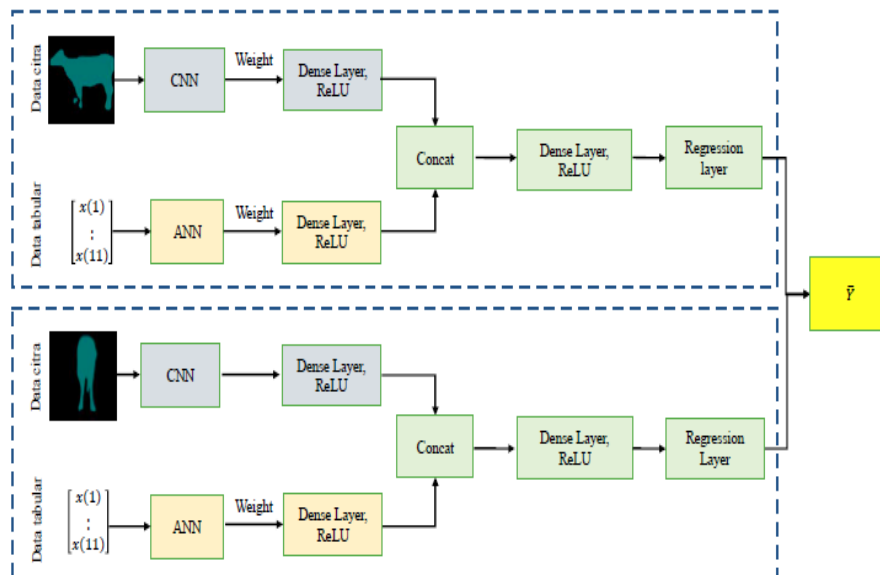


Figure 3. Cattle weight prediction model

There are two separate inputs to this model, the first input layer is for image data, while the second input layer is for additional data. The model demonstrates that the outputs from multiple pathways are processed independently before being combined, enabling the model to learn from both image data and additional data simultaneously. The output layer generates the model's final prediction utilizing a single neuron for regression tasks. For the output layer that performs regression, a linear operation is applied as follows:

$$Y_{pred} = W_{final} X_{concat} + b_{final} \tag{1}$$

where:

- $Y_{pred}$  is the predicted weight outcomes for each input.
- $\hat{Y}$  is The average value of the two prediction outcomes.
- $X_{concat}$  is the output from the concatenation layer.
- $W_{final}$  is the weight of the output layer.
- $b_{final}$  is the bias of the output layer.

Concurrently, fine-tuning of several parameters. Before the integration, CNN consisting of filters 64, 8, 16 with a 2:2 pooling layer and rectified linear unit (ReLU) activation, while in ANN, they consist of nodes 8, 16 with ReLU activation. Subsequent to integration, the model's parameters were adjusted to incorporate 4 units in total, comprising a single output layer unit with linear activation. Additionally, a dropout function with a rate of 0.5 was incorporated, and the Adam optimizer was employed. We conducted iterations over 200 epochs, beginning with a combination of 1 layer in the CNN and 2 layers in the ANN. This process continued until reaching a combination of 3 layers in both with grid search to find the best combination. To identify the most effective model, we recorded the MAPE values. The exhaustive grid search process demands a considerable amount of time. Therefore, we constrain our search combinations to a maximum of 64, given the limitations in time and resources. Based on our observations, we have noted that as the complexity of MAPE calculations increases, there is no corresponding improvement in MAPE values. Tables 4 and 5 present the training results for both side-view and rear-view inputs. Based on our testing results, we found that the best model for the rear-view data achieved an MAPE of 11.259 with 3:2 combination using CNN filters of 64, 8, 16, and ANN nodes 8, 16. Meanwhile, the best model for the side-view data attained an MAPE of 12.432 with 2:2 combination using CNN filters of 64, 64, and ANN nodes of 64, 64.

Table 4. Result training model rear-view image data

Rear-view image data			
Combination	CNN	ANN	MAPE
1:2 (8 - 64)	32	16:32	11.402
2:1 (8 - 64)	32:32	16	12.03
2:2 (8 - 64)	64:16	3:32	11.495
2:3 (8 - 64)	32:8	64:8:64	11.858
3:2 (8 - 64)	64:8:16	8:16	11.259
3:3 (8 - 64)	64:64:32	32:64:16	11.532

Table 5. Result training model side-view image data

Side-view data			
Combination	CNN	ANN	MAPE
1:2 (8 - 64)	16	32:8	13.193
2:1 (8 - 64)	16:64	64	12.719
2:2 (8 - 64)	64:64	64:64	12.432
2:3 (8 - 64)	8:8	64:8:64	12.656
3:2 (8 - 64)	32:32:64	32:64	12.721
3:3 (8 - 64)	8:32:8	64:32:16	12.488

After identifying the best model from both inputs, the average prediction values using the test data were determined, as shown in Table 6. To measure the error value between the predicted and actual values, the MAPE measurement method is used. The same procedure is applied during the modeling process.

$$MAPE = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n \left| \frac{A_i - F_i}{A_i} \right| \times 100\% \quad (2)$$

Where: n is sample size,  $A_i$  is the actual data value,  $F_i$  is predicted value.

The average MAPE obtained was 10. In the analysis of prediction outcomes utilizing the test dataset, as delineated in Table 6, which encompasses 15 paired bovine image datasets, it was observed that the side view aspect images of cows yielded predictions more closely aligned with their actual weight relative to the rear-view aspect images. Nonetheless, both sets of image data significantly contributed to the overall predictive accuracy. This is evidenced by an average MAPE of 10%, underscoring the efficacy of the employed predictive model in estimating bovine weight with a reasonable degree of precision.

The residual distribution of our model, as illustrated in Figure 4, is relatively symmetrical around the zero value, suggesting that the model does not possess a significant systematic bias meaning it neither consistently overpredicts nor underpredicts. This symmetry indicates that the model generally avoids making large errors in comparison to the true values, reflecting a commendable level of accuracy. Variations in the residual values suggest that while the model does incur prediction errors, these errors are contained within a certain range, and the absence of very large errors points to the model's consistency. Moreover, the balance observed between positive and negative residuals further implies that the model maintains a neutral approach in its predictive accuracy, without a tendency to skew in one direction. The residual histogram shows a mixture of positive and negative residuals, with no dominant trend to either side. This indicates that the

proposed model in this study does not systematically overestimate or underestimate the predicted values. Test data was collected using the digital weight artificial intelligence (DiWAI) interface while inference was done on a server preinstalled with a prediction model, as illustrated in Figure 5. The information that can be provided consists of predictive outcomes, age, and data collection locations.

Table 6. Result of implementation model

No	ID	Actual weight (kg)	Age	Prediction for rear (kg)	Prediction for side (kg)	Average prediction (kg)	MAPE
1	B4A03.jpg	243	2	251	254	252	3.9095
2	B4A11.jpg	212	2	192	223	207	2.1226
3	C1A07.jpg	270	5	204	238	221	18.148
4	C1A21.jpg	230	2	186	215	205	12.826
5	D019.jpg	177	3	193	289	241	36.158
6	D058.jpg	147	2	149	159	154	4.7619
7	D066.jpg	297	3	331	291	311	4.7138
8	D069.jpg	277	2	314	265	289	4.5126
9	D075.jpg	291	3	239	254	246	15.292
10	D0125.jpg	252	3	241	264	242	0.1984
11	D134.jpg	305	3	250	238	244	20
12	D146.jpg	280	3	253	301	277	1.0714
13	D147.jpg	247	4	214	247	230	06.6802
14	S11.jpg	257	2	229	224	226	11.868
Average MAPE						10.162	

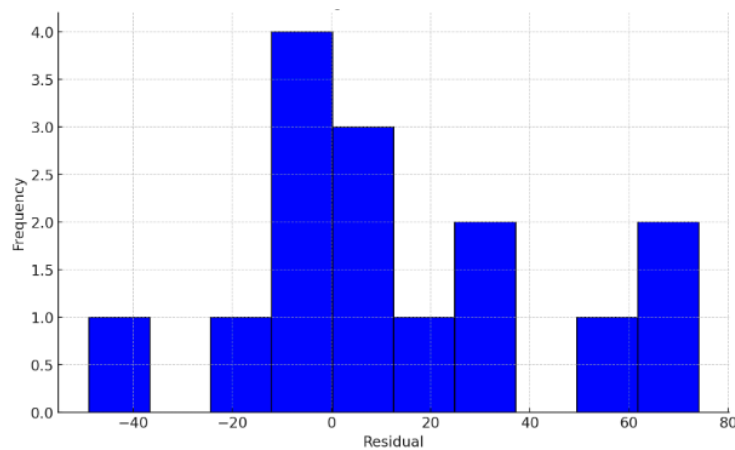


Figure 4. Residual histogram from testing

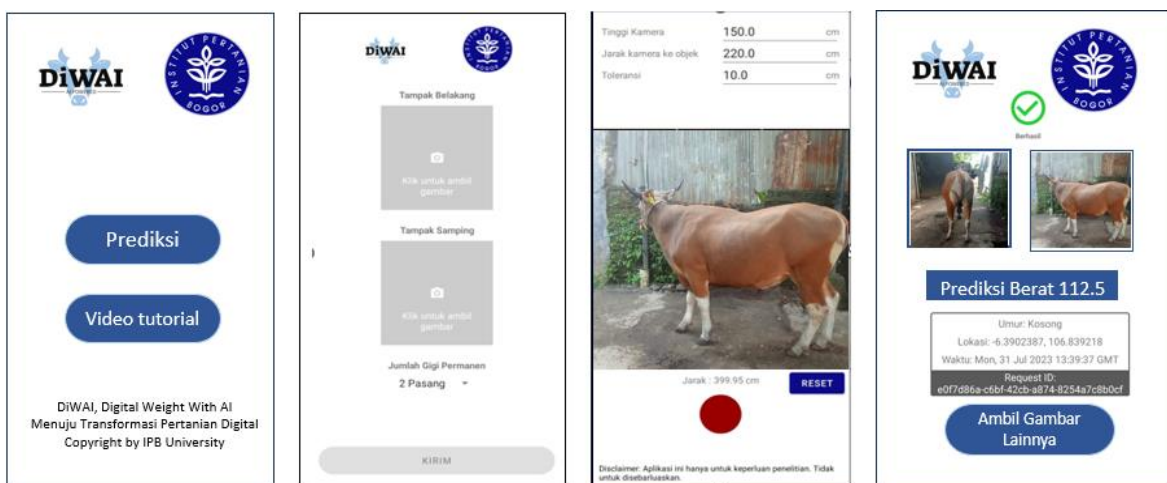


Figure 5. DiWAI interface

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In this study, to obtain a predictive model for cattle weight, we combined CNN and ANN algorithms with various parameter combinations using the grid search function. Our findings provide conclusive evidence that the best model for rear-view data achieved an MAPE of 11.259% with a 3:2 combination, utilizing CNN filters of 64, 8, 16, and ANN nodes of 8, 16. Meanwhile, the optimal model for side-view data obtained an MAPE of 12.432% with a 2:2 combination, employing CNN filters of 64, 64, and ANN nodes of 64, 64. The average prediction of both models yielded an MAPE of 10%. Therefore, these predictive models on these parameters can be recommended for predicting cattle weight. Further development prospects involve adding independent variables such as breed, body condition score (BCS), climate or others.

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