

# An embedded system for the classification of sleep disorders using ECG signals

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## ABSTRACT

Sleep apnea (SA) is a well-known sleep disorder. It predominantly appears due to lack of oxygen in humans. Identifying SA at an early stage can help early diagnosis. The primary motto of our research is to identify SA using electrocardiogram (ECG) signals. Here, three classes are considered for classification. One is normal (N), and the other two are SA classes obstructive sleep apnea (OA) and central sleep apnea (CA). ECG signals are accumulated for MIT-BIH polysomnographic dataset. The ECG data divided into ECG segments and labelled using annotation file. The proposed deep long short-term memory (LSTM) model is then trained using ECG segments and further tested. The model is then finetuned and optimized to obtain the best accuracy. An accuracy of 98.51% is obtained. In addition, performance measures like precision, sensitivity, specificity, F-score are also evaluated. The model is then deployed on NVIDIA's Jetson nano board to build a prototype. Our model is effective, promising and outperformed existing state of art techniques.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Sleep apnea (SA) becomes a major problem while human breathing is interrupted [1]. Persons with SA often feels tired even after having a proper sleep. SA is mainly categorized as obstructive sleep apnea (OA) and central sleep apnea (CA) [2]. Obstructive apnea occurs when the upper airway is repeatedly blocked during sleep, leading to a decrease or cessation of airflow. CA occurs when the brain does not send breathing signals, which makes it difficult for a person to breathe. The standard way to diagnose SA is polysomnography (PSG), which needs analyzing the patients' physiological data while sleeping. Collecting data using PSG is costly and time-consuming. Several cost-effective methods have been proposed to detect SA [3]-[6]. Some researchers contend that SA constitutes a predictable risk factor for stroke, leading to individuals affected by SA having an approximate twofold increased risk of stroke when contrasted with those unaffected by the condition [7]. It is evident that SA poses a significant risk to the overall physical and mental well-being of individuals worldwide, as approximately 936 million adults between age 30-69 experience mild to severe OA while 425 million adults in the same age group endure moderate to severe OA [8]. High prevalence of SA, it is crucial to conduct screenings for individuals with this disorder and implement prompt interventions. The significance of our research is to detect SA using electrocardiogram (ECG) signals. The dataset used in this study is MIT-BIH polysomnographic dataset [9].

Collection of ECG data is highly cost effective [10], [11]. Hence, the models developed using ECG data are lowest cost models that can identify SA over a period. Various academic studies have examined the

efficacy of identifying SA through the analysis of ECG signals [11]-[25]. Kaya and Yilmaz [12] tried find the relation between SA and ECG signals. The relationship between sleep apnea and ventricular re-polarization was examined. The significance of examining the ECG signals to detect the occurrence of SA [12] was noted. Xie and Minn [14] used an adaptive boosted decision tree algorithm [13] along with decision stump to identify sleep apnea. Rodrigues *et al.* [16] examined various classification models for predicting apnea-hypopnea index (AHI). Nishad *et al.* [17] offers a straightforward method for detecting sleep apnea in adult patients, with the ability to discern its presence through visual examination of ECG using filterbanks. Chen *et al.* [18] considered bidirectional gated recurrent units (Bi-GRUs) as building blocks of the model. Novel model was proposed by adding Bi-GRU layer to 1-D CNN. Uznańska *et al.* [19] identified a strong association between sleep apnea and cardiovascular illness. Liu *et al.* [20] considered the pretrained EfficientNet model as backbone and utilized XGboost to update the sample weights. Varon *et al.* [21] introduced an innovative automated approach for detecting sleep apnea using wide neural networks. In their study, for decomposition of nonstationary data, non parameterized techniques were used. Li *et al.* [22] introduced a novel approach combining neural networks and hidden markov models (HMM) to identify SA. Chang *et al.* [23] developed one dimensional CNN for detecting sleep apnea using ECG signal. Sheta *et al.* [24] considered time series data to develop a DL model. An long short-term memory (LSTM) layer along with CNN was used. Mashrur *et al.* [25] proposed an end to end approach using wavelet transforms and empirical mode decomposition (EMD) along with 2-D CNN. ECG segments were converted into scalograms and considered as input.

Various hardware boards with integrated CPU along with graphic cards can be found for prototyping needs, including Jetson Nano/AGX/ TX1/TX2/Xavier, Raspberry Pi, Beagle Board, and Asus Tinker Board [10]. The NVIDIA Jetson platforms, exhibit superior functioning capabilities attributed to their high-speed GPUs. As a result, the Jetson series stands at the forefront of single-board computing within the realm of deep learning applications by providing developer kits with diverse features. The use of the Nvidia Jetson Nano developer kit in the creation of a prototype exemplifies its efficacy in facilitating innovative projects and technological advancements. Hence, in this research jetson nano kit is used to build hardware prototype.

The intent of this study is to develop a deep LSTM model using LSTM blocks. Three classes normal (N), OA and CA are considered for classification. This work mainly emphasizes on detecting SA using time-series data. ECG Signals are collected from MIT-BIH polysomnography dataset and segmented to obtain ECG segments. These segments are labelled via annotations file given in database. Deep networks are developed using LSTM building blocks with 300 hidden unit. This developed network is trained and optimized. Then it is tested for detecting SA using NVIDIA jetson board.

The remaining part of the paper is structured as follows. Section 2 depicts our proposed approach, including the details on dataset, segmentation and deep learning framework. Section 3 describes the experimental setup used for classification. In section 4, investigative findings are detailed and compared with literature. Section 5 describes the conclusion of our research.

## 2. METHOD

The objective of our research is to identify SA from ECG signals. The Data is collected from MIT-BIH polysomnographic dataset and segmented into ECG segments. These ECG segments are labelled using the annotations mentioned in database. The labelled dataset is considered for training and testing the proposed DeepLSTM model. Figure 1 signifies the proposed methodology.

### 2.1. MIT-BIH Polysomnographic dataset

MIT-BIH polysomnographic dataset [8] contains 18 records. Dataset considered in this research is an imbalance dataset. To consider balanced data, we have considered 7 records-Slp01am, Slp01bm, Slp04m, Slp16m, Slp37m, Slp60m, Slp67xm in this research. The segments in these records are labelled as per the annotations given in dataset. The remaining records have a majority of normal signals and only few apnea signals. Hence, the remaining signals are ignored. The summary of beats considered is shown in Table 1.

The Normal class is noted as 'N', obstructive sleep apnea class is notes as 'OA', and central sleep apnea class is noted as 'CA'. These three considered classes are shown in Figure 2. The labelled data is further divided into training, testing and validation data. Summary of beats considered for training, testing, and validation is given in Table 2.

### 2.2. Deep LSTM framework

LSTM is a type of recurrent network used for processing time-series data. In this study we have considered LSTM blocks to build a LSTM layer. 300 hidden LSTM blocks are used to develop a LSTM layer. Labelled ECG segments are given as inputs to designed LSTM layer. The output is connected to fully

connected layer followed by SoftMax activation. The layered architecture of proposed DeepLSTM framework is displayed in Figure 3.

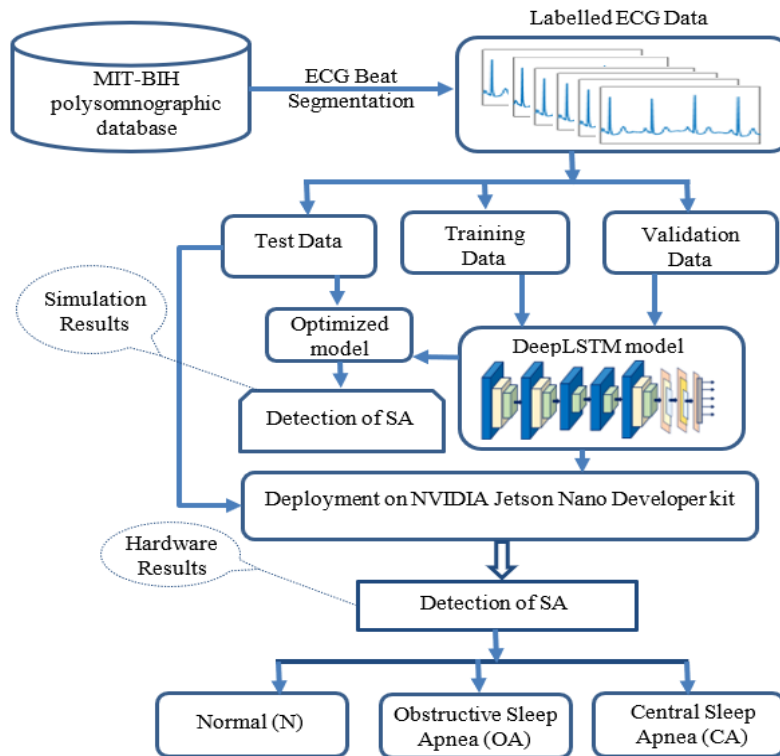


Figure 1. Proposed methodology

Table 1. Details of considered ECG segments form dataset

Record	Normal (N)	Obstructive sleep apnea (OA)	Central sleep Apnea (CA)
Slp01am	564	-	-
Slp01bm	336	-	-
Slp04m	-	165	-
Slp16m	-	210	-
Slp37m	-	525	-
Slp60m	-	-	147
Slp67xm	-	-	753
Total	900	900	900

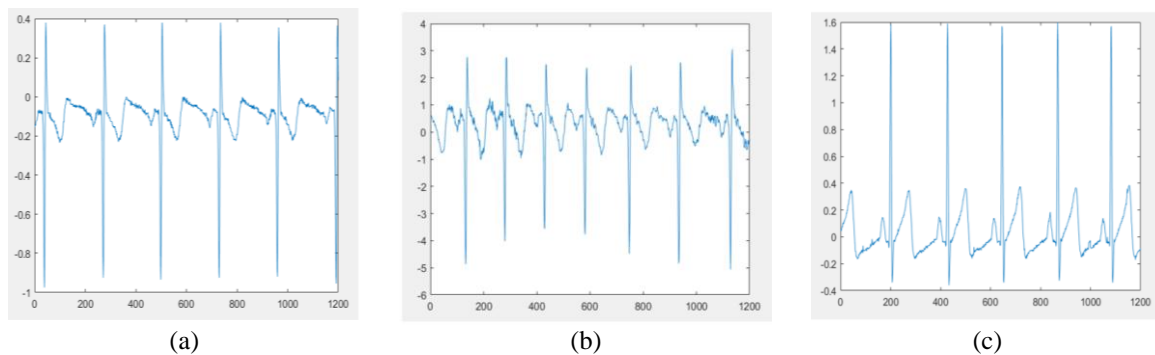


Figure 2. ECG signals considered from dataset, (a) normal ECG, (b) obstructive sleep apnea class, and (c) central sleep apnea class

Table 2. Details of ECG segments considered for training, validation and testing

Class	Training	Validation	Testing	Total
N	630	90	180	900
OA	630	90	180	900
CA	630	90	180	900
Total	1890	270	540	2700

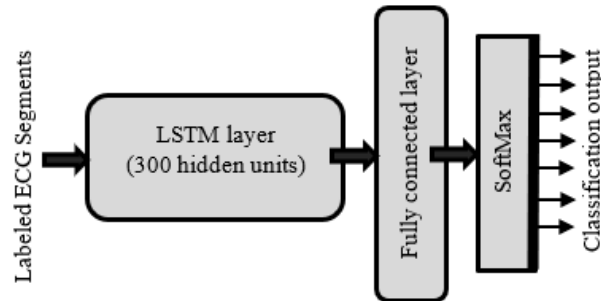


Figure 3. Layered architecture of proposed DeepLSTM framework

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

NVIDIA Jetson nano board is utilized for developing hardware prototype. Its functionality affords us the opportunity to conduct the training of a designated DNN with a power consumption limited to 5 watts. This board is equipped with a 64-bit quad-core Arm CortexA57 CPU operated at 1.43 Gigahertz, paired with a NVIDIA Maxwell GPU containing 128 CUDA cores capable of 472 GFLOPs (FP16), and is supported by 4 GB of 64-bit LPDDR4 RAM. Tegrastats was utilized for the purpose of performance analysis and training Deep Neural Networks. It is a tool offered by NVIDIA for collecting data on hardware utilization, memory usage, and power consumption of both the CPU and GPU. NVIDIA Jetson nano developer kit is shown in Figure 4.

A total of 2700 ECG segments as given in Table 1 are considered for training, testing and validation. The step-by-step evaluation of the result obtains during the training process is shown in Figure 5. Once the training is completed, build the executable file. Initialize the libraries CuDNN, TensorRT along with nvcc path and check CUDA availability. Now, launch the executable file on target. Figure 6 shows the results when the executable file is launched on hardware and tested with test data. The confusion matrix obtained when tested with 540 ECG segments is shown in Figure 6. It is observed that for Class 'N', all the 180 ECG segments are correctly classified as class 'N'. Out of 180 'OA'. 174 segments are correctly classified as 'OA' and 6 segments are misclassified as 'CA'. Similarly, among 180 'CA' segments 178 are correctly identified as 'CA' and 2 segments are misclassified as 'OA'.

To verify the efficacy of developed model, precision, specificity, sensitivity, F-score, and accuracy are evaluated using formulae listed [26]-[28].

$$\text{Precision} = \frac{Tp}{Tp+Fp} \quad (1)$$

$$\text{Recall} = \frac{Tp}{Tp+Fn} \quad (2)$$

$$\text{Specificity} = \frac{Tn}{Fp+Tn} \quad (3)$$

$$F - \text{Score} = \frac{Tp}{Tp+0.5(Fp+Fn)} \quad (4)$$

$$\text{Accuracy} = \frac{Tp+Tn}{Tp+Fp+Fn+Tn} \quad (5)$$

Where  $Tp$ -True positives,  $Tn$  -True negatives,  $Fp$  -False positives and  $Fn$  -False negatives. The performance parameters of our proposed DeepLSTM framework is summarized in Table 3. It can be observed that there is no misclassification of 'N' type segments. All of the misclassified segments are from 'OA' and 'CA' type ECG segments.

Numerous findings observed by researchers are listed in Table 4. Kaya and Yilmaz [12] developed a ML algorithm using decision tree and used ensemble method adaboost to improve the performance. An

accuracy of 82% was obtained. Uznańska *et al.* [19] performed HRV analysis considering ECG signals and an accuracy of 85% was obtained. Liu *et al.* [20] achieved an accuracy of 85% using a hybrid model which includes DL and HMM. Varon *et al.* [21] implemented a DL model using 1D CNN and achieved an accuracy of 87.9%. Li *et al.* [22] added LSTM layer along with CNN and achieved an accuracy of 86.25%. Our proposed DeepLSTM outperformed existing methodologies with an accuracy of 98.51%.



Figure 4. NVIDIA Jetson nano developer kit

```

Number of training images: 1890
Number of validation images: 270

Initializing input data normalization.
=====
| Epoch | Iteration | Time Elapsed | Mini-batch | Validation | Mini-batch | Validation | Base Learning |
|        |           | (hh:mm:ss)  | Accuracy   | Accuracy   | Loss        | Loss        | Rate          |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | 1 | 00:00:00 | 26.67% | 59.38% | 4.6580 | 1.4526 | 0.0010 |
| 2 | 30 | 00:10:01 | 73.33% | 59.38% | 0.9057 | 0.9468 | 0.0010 |
| 3 | 60 | 00:20:03 | 66.67% | 62.50% | 1.0064 | 1.0275 | 0.0010 |
| 4 | 90 | 00:30:04 | 66.67% | 59.38% | 0.7693 | 0.8893 | 0.0010 |
| 5 | 120 | 00:40:05 | 33.33% | 59.38% | 1.0207 | 0.7603 | 0.0010 |
| 7 | 150 | 00:50:07 | 86.67% | 78.12% | 0.5593 | 0.6586 | 0.0010 |
| 8 | 180 | 01:00:08 | 86.67% | 81.25% | 0.3727 | 0.5614 | 0.0010 |
| 9 | 210 | 01:10:09 | 86.67% | 78.12% | 0.3077 | 0.5213 | 0.0010 |
| 10 | 240 | 01:20:11 | 80.00% | 75.00% | 0.5895 | 0.5206 | 0.0010 |
| 12 | 270 | 01:30:12 | 73.33% | 84.38% | 0.4651 | 0.4970 | 0.0010 |
| 13 | 300 | 01:40:13 | 86.67% | 78.12% | 0.2746 | 0.5063 | 0.0010 |
| 14 | 330 | 01:50:15 | 86.67% | 81.25% | 0.2943 | 0.6244 | 0.0010 |
| 15 | 360 | 02:00:16 | 100.00% | 78.12% | 0.2102 | 0.4025 | 0.0010 |
| 17 | 390 | 02:10:17 | 93.33% | 91.25% | 0.2943 | 0.6244 | 0.0010 |
| 18 | 420 | 02:20:19 | 100.00% | 98.12% | 0.2746 | 0.5063 | 0.0010 |
| 19 | 450 | 02:30:20 | 100.00% | 98.12% | 0.2102 | 0.4025 | 0.0010 |
| 20 | 465 | 02:40:21 | 100.00% | 99.62% | 0.0017 | 0.0315 | 0.0010 |
=====
Total training time: 02hh 40mm 32ss

accuracy =
0.9962

Trained network size: 2982.32 kB
Test prediction time (number of tests: 270)... Average prediction time (execution environment: gpu): 8.95e-03 sec
    
```

Figure 5. Step by step evaluation

```

### Launching the executable on the target...
Executable launched successfully with process ID 13812.
Displaying the simple runtime log for the executable...
Note: For the complete log, run the following command in the MATLAB command window:
system(hwobj,'C:/Users/Documents/MATLAB/R2023b//NVIDIAJetson/model_predict_ecg.log')
Fetch time = 1.908e+01 sec
tPred = 1.955e+01 sec

      CA   OA   W
CA   178   2   0
OA    6  174   0
W     0   0  180

accuracy =
0.985185
    
```

Figure 6. Hardware results

Table 3. Performance measures

Class	Precision (%)	Sensitivity (%)	Specificity (%)	F-score (%)
N	100	100	100	100
OA	96.667	98.864	98.352	97.753
CA	98.889	96.739	99.438	97.802
Overall Test accuracy: 98.51%				

Table 4. Comparison of our approach with state-of-the-art models

Authors	Method	Performance (%)
Xie and Minn <i>et al.</i> [14]	Decision tree with Adaboost	82
Varon <i>et al.</i> [21]	Wide neural networks (WNN)	96.60
Li <i>et al.</i> [22]	DL+HMM hybrid model	85
Chang <i>et al.</i> [23]	1D CNN model	87.9
Sheta <i>et al.</i> [24]	CNN+LSTM	86.25
Mashrur <i>et al.</i> [25]	CWT+EMD	94.3
Our proposed model	DeepLSTM	98.51

#### 4. CONCLUSION

DeepLSTM model has been proposed to detect SA from ECG signal. The data has been collected from MIT-BIH polysomnographic database. ECG signals are then segmented into ECG segments. These segments are labelled using the annotation file mentioned in database. The proposed model is then trained considering various hyperparameters. Further, model is saved with best hyperparameters and then tested. Our model recorded the best accuracy of 98.51% compared to existing literature. It is concluded that sleep disorders can be identified using sleep quality features from a 30-second epoch of the ECG signal. This method has proven to be reliable for modeling sleep disorders without the need for a multichannel PSG signal. Additionally, it is straightforward to implement on embedded hardware devices. Our proposed system is portable and customizable, making it an ideal solution for continuous sleep apnea monitoring.





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