Solving Smartphone-based Human Activity problem using Recurrent Neural Network with CNN features

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**Abstract.** Wearable-based approach and vision-based approach are two of the most common approaches in human activity recognition. However, these approaches are inconvenient and not easy to implement. For instance, there is a privacy issue revolving in the vision-based approach. Hence, smartphone-based human physical activity recognition is a popular alternative. In this paper, we propose a combination of the CNN model and the RNN variant model (BLSTM) to interpret and predict accelerometer and gyroscope data captured using a smartphone for activity recognition. The proposed deep model is able to extract deep features from both spatial and temporal domains of the inertial data. The recognition accuracy of the proposed model is assessed using UCI and WISDM accelerometer data. Empirical results exhibit a promising performance.

Keywords: HAR, CNN, BLSTM, keyword four, keyword five

# Introduction

On the World Health Organization (WHO) website, Global Health Observatory (GHO) data reveals approximately 23% of adults are not sufficiently active [1]. The level of insufficient physical activity is even worse in those high-income countries, in which about 60% of adults are insufficiently physically active. Physical inactivity is one of the ten top risk factors for mortality. WHO applauded that there is a 20% to 30% increased risk of all-cause mortality to people who are insufficiently physically active, compared to those who have at least two and half hours moderate-intensity physical activity per week.

Overwhelming testimony substantiates the belief that the insufficiency of physical activity contributes to a host of chronic diseases such as ischaemic heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, stroke, hypertension, depression, and cancers [2], [3]. The upsurge of chronic diseases potentially impacts social and economic costs, for example, unemployment at the labour market, financial burden, etc [4]. Hence, communities must take action to increase individuals physical activity.

Regular recognition and self-monitoring of physical activity can potentially encourage habits of adopting a healthy lifestyle such as regular exercise, as they have a more positive outcome expectancy of their body figure [5], [6]. ICT-enabled assisted living or “ambient assisted living” (AAL) systems are solutions for the objective. Intelligent human activity recognition (HAR) system is one of the crucial components in such innovations. There are two kinds of HAR systems: vision-based, wearable sensor-based and smartphone-based [4], [7]–[10].

# Motivation

Wearable sensor-based approach and vision-based approach are two of the most common approaches in HAR. Both attain promising recognition performance, reaching above 80% accuracy in recognizing human physical activity [7], [11], [12]. However, these approaches are inconvenient and not easy to implement. For instance, there is a privacy issue revolving in the vision-based approach. Placing a surveillance camera in public places may violate the law and require extensive justification to obtain permits. On the other hand, in a wearable sensor-based approach, some people are reluctant to wear the sensor device(s) [13].

Henceforth, physical activity prediction using a smartphone is a contemporary research area in the HAR domain. Smartphone is a sensor-based ubiquitous piece of technology that is far more than just a communication device. With great technology development, smartphones are packed with high-end hardware and features. Several sensors are embedded inside smartphones, including motion sensors. The potential of the smartphone-based HAR approach is uplifted due to the mobility and simplicity of smartphone usage, providing people something very accessible and easy to use. Hence, the smartphone-based human physical activity prediction system based on temporal dynamics deep features is proposed in this paper.

An amalgamation of a one-dimensional (1D) convolutional neural network and recurrent neural network (RNN) variant, i.e. bi-directional Long Short Term Memory, is proposed to predict human activity based on the inertial data captured from a smartphone, illustrated in Fig. 1.

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| Fig 1: 1D CNN and RNN variant HAR model |

# Literature Review on Human Activity Recognition

As aforementioned, HAR can be categorized into three spheres: (1) vision-based HAR, (2) wearable sensor-based HAR and (3) smartphone-based HAR. Vision-based human activity recognition (coined as VHAR) is a process of categorizing a sequence of image recording with action/ activity class labels [7]. VHAR systems are extensively employed in various applications, especially for public area surveillance, healthcare monitoring as well as human-computer interaction. The proposed VHAR approaches include but not limited to Discrete Fourier transform-based HAR to extract global representation of activity data [14], stacked Fisher vectors to capture more statistical information from frame images [15], extraction of multi-features from body silhouettes and joints information [16], etc.

However, the privacy issue in VHAR is a major concern from the public. Hence, the wearble sensor-based HAR (coined as WHAR) is proposed as an alternative. The main applications of WHAR are in the areas of healthcare, sport training, smart environment etc. Wearable sensors include accelerometer, gyroscope, and magnetometer. The works include performing HAR using artificial neural network and smartwatch [17], Convolutional Neural Network for k-nearest neighborhood-based wearable sensor HAR [18], adopting J48 classifier in HAR for wearable sensors [19] etc.

Inconveniences of wearing, technological barriers such as limitation of current battery technology and culture barriers such as the association of a stigma with the use of medical sensing devices for monitoring limit the potential of WHAR usage. Smartphone-based approach is a seemly alternative for collecting motion inertial data signals. Most smartphones are equipped with a built-in gyroscope and accelerometer. In recent years, there are extensive research works working on adopting smartphones for HAR done by other researchers [4], [8], [20]–[24]. Kwapisz et al. utilize triaxial acceleration data captured by an Android smartphone to perform human activities [10]. The raw triaxial acceleration data is divided into 10-second segments. Then, forty-three statistical features are computed for each segment. The authors evaluate their self-collected dataset, namely Wireless Sensor Data Mining (WISDM) dataset, with various kinds of classifiers. Empirical results show a promising performance.

In [20], a new database, namely UC Irvine (UCI) HAR dataset is collected with six different activity classes from a group of 30 volunteers carrying the smartphone on their waist. The collected data is triaxial acceleration and angular velocity data. The collected inertial signals are sampled in fixed-width sliding windows of 2.56 seconds with a 50% overlap between them. Next, 561 time and frequency domain features are extracted to describe each activity window. Support Vector Machine (SVM) is used to classify the activities.

Human activities are hierarchical. Hence, deep learning comprising multiple layers of neural networks is explored to reveal features from low to higher levels hierarchically. Deep learning has become a critical research in HAR [25]–[28]. Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) or commonly referred to as Covnet (LeNet) is a popular deep learning model [29], [30]. CNN is proposed to capture the local dependencies and spatial domain of activity signals [31]. The authors utilize multichannel time series data to recognize users’ activity and hand gestures. Since the inertial signal is a one-dimensional (1D) data, the traditional CNN has been improved to perform 1D convolution operation on the accelerometer and gyroscope triaxial sensor data [8], [25].

Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM), a variant of Recurrent Neural Network (RNN), has been proposed on triaxial accelerometers data for smartphone-based human activity prediction [32]. LSTM adopts past information to predict the outcome of a HAR model. It allows the network to learn when to “forget” previous hidden states and when to update hidden states given new information. However, some information may not be captured since human motion is continuous [33].

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| Fig 2: Architecture of C3M1BL |

Since LSTM only takes in past information, Bi-directional Long Short-Term Memory, coined as BLSTM, is proposed to tackle both past information and future information. In other words, BLSTM is stacked into layers both horizontally and vertically. In the model, a single LSTM node can take in information from the horizontal layer for both past and future information, as well as from a vertical layer which is the lower hidden layer. [33] and [34] utilizes BLSTM on HAR using the inertial sensor in the smartphone. Experimental results demonstrate that the models outperform other existing approaches.

# Contributions of the work

Upholding the hypotheses of (1) the spatial and temporal information embedded in the inertial signal is crucial to represent activity, and (2) human activities are hierarchical, we propose a temporal dynamics deep learner that extract features from low to higher levels hierarchically from spatial and temporal domains. The main contributions of this work are summarized into threefold:

1. A stacking spatial-temporal deep model is developed to extract low level to higher-level features of inertial data for human activity recognition. Piling a convolutional architecture to deep BLSTM models enables both spatial and temporal state dependencies encapsulation to predict human activity.
2. Various machine learning algorithms are explored to evaluate the effectiveness of the deep features extracted by the proposed dynamics deep model. These machine learning algorithms include logistic regression, support vector machine, Naïve Bayes, random forest, multilayer perceptron, k-nearest neighbours etc.
3. An extensive experimental analysis is conducted on two publicly available datasets, namely WISDM and UCI datasets. Influence of hyperparameter settings towards the recognition performance is also presented on top of addressing the performance comparison with other approaches.

# Proposed Solution

This work proposes a temporal deep learner stacking a hierarchical convolutional architecture with a model that comprehends the dynamics pattern of the inertial sequential data to predict human activity. Fig. 2 illustrate the proposed solution. In the architecture, the feature extraction structure comprises of three convolutional layers, one max-pooling layers, flattening layer and BLSTM layer. Then, the deep features are further classified using machine learning algorithms. In this work, we only consider acceleration data acquired from the accelerometer sensor of the smartphone. In other words, three features of inertial signals are taken into account, that is triaxial (*x*, *y* and *z*-) acceleration data. Utilizing these narrow features, the deep feature extraction structure will extract those underlying rich features before performing classification.

The neural processors of the lower layers attain local features of the inertial signal to signify the elementary motion in physical activity; whilst, higher layer neural processors extract a better abstraction of the motion with higher-level features and temporal analysis. Convolutional layers read a sequence data, i.e. one-dimensional signal, using a kernel that reads in small windows at a time and strides across the entire input signal. Each read results in an input to be projected onto a feature map, representing the internal interpretation of the input. Since each convolutional layer contains multiple neurons/kernels, multiple feature maps will be constructed after every layer and concatenated, as illustrated in Fig. 3.

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| Fig 3: Convolution Operation on Activity Signal |

Through the convolution operation, those local dependencies in the inertial data could be apprehended. Hence, the correlation between nearby signal points could be pictured, revealing the structure of the signal pattern. Next, the max-pooling layer is implemented to downsample each feature map independently for a summarized version of the captured features. Besides, pooling helps for the model’s invariance to local translations of the input. With this property, a slight translational variance of the input data will not affect the values of the pooled output.

Since the CNN model unearths those underlying patterns in the input signal, it is able to encapsulate the tiny changes in the motion signal. These changes in sequential form are substantial to characterize activity motion. Hence, the RNN variant model is included in the proposed architecture to build time dynamics for the feature map by analyzing the underlying sequential pattern in the spatial-temporal feature map.

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| Deep Dive into Bidirectional LSTM | i2tutorials |
| Fig 4 Architecture of BLSTM |

In the proposed architecture, bidirectional LSTM (BLSTM) is adopted since it can have better prediction using both past and future information, i.e. utilizing information from the previous and upcoming frames [35]. BLSTM is just like stacking two LSTM on top of each other, illustrated in Fig. 4. One LSTM moves in the forward direction, while the other one moves in the opposite, i.e. backward direction. Then, the outputs of LSTMs are fused and computed as BLSTM output. After then, the deep features of BLSTM are extracted and fed into machine learning classifiers for activity prediction.

## Architecture and Formulation

In this work, both CNN and Bidir-LSTM are based on [33]’s equations which derived from [29], [36]. The CNN formulation is simplified as followed:

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|  |  | (1) |

Where denotes CNN output at th layer, is the activation function such as Relu, refers to the bias term in CNN, *W* is the weight from the previous layer in CNN, V is the input vector of our accelerometer signal in our datasets.

Max Pooling conducts pooling operation, usually on CNN output. The pooling operation converts the input sets to the highest:

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|  |  | (2) |

Where P is the output of the pooling operation, and is the CNN output at the th layer. CNN and max-pooling often place after each other in deep learning models to learn representations of a set of input.

Taking P from max-pooling operation as input vector, the LSTM fed the input vector into its memory cell and four gates which consist of the forget gate, input gate, input modulation gate, and output gate. First, we look into the forget gate, at any given timestep :

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|  |  | (3) |

Where is the forget gate output at n layer at timestep and is the sigmoid function, denotes the weight of the connection at forget gate, is the LSTM output from the previous layer,denotes the input vector of the dataset, and denotes the bias term for the forget gate. The next gate is the input gate which is as follows:

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|  |  | (4) |

Where is the input gate output at n layer at timestep and is the sigmoid function, denotes the weight of the connection at the input gate, is the LSTM output from the previous layer, denotes the input vector of the dataset, and denotes the bias term for the input gate. Similar to the input gate and forget gate, the output gate exhibits similar equations:

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|  |  | (5) |

Where denotes the output gate output at n layer at timestep and is the sigmoid function, denotes the weight of the connection at the output gate, is the LSTM output from the previous layer, denotes the input vector of the dataset, and denotes the bias term for the output gate. Next is the input modulation gate which is a function of the input vector and the previous state output:

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|  |  | (6) |

Where denotes the input modulation gate output at n layer at timestep with function, denotes the weight of the connection at the input modulation gate which is based on the previous state, is the LSTM output from the previous layer, denotes the input vector of the dataset, and denotes the bias term for the input modulation gate based on previous state gate.

The state gate or memory cell consists of two terms: the previous memory cell state which is modulated by forget gate , and input modulation gate which is modulated by input gate at timestep :

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|  |  | (7) |

Ergo, the LSTM outputs the combination of the output gate and state gate, with the following equation:

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|  |  | (8) |

Where denotes the LSTM output at n layer at timestep , refers to the output gate’s output at n layer with function, denotes the state gate’s output at n layer as well. The LSTM node output two values to the next LSTM nodes. The subsequent LSTM node will use this two information accordingly to update their state and eventually the update status of the whole network. This gives the LSTM network takes the ability to take into past information.

Bidir-LSTM has both forward sequences and backward sequences in the hidden layer. At time t, the hidden layer and the input layer can be defined as follows:

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|  |  | (9) |
|  |  | (10) |
|  | ) | (11) |

Where denotes the forward sequence, denotes the backward sequence of LSTM operation, refers to the Bidir-LSTM output, A refers to the activation function used in the network, W refers to the weight of the connection and B refers to the bias term. These forward and backward sequences allow the LSTM nodes to takes in previous and subsequent information to update its state, this will subsequently update the state of the whole network. This gives the Bidir-LSTM’s properties to use past and future information to effectively output a deeper representation of a set of data inputs.

In general, the sequential input of the activity signal can be map into CNN for convolutional operation to produce a fixed-size vector representation and is subsequently passed into Bidir-LSTM for recurrent sequence learning. The deep features extracted will then be passed to Dense-layer for classification using the Softmax classifier algorithm.

# Experiment

## Experiment Setup

# Evaluation

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