(An Autonomous Institute Affiliated to Savitribai Phule Pune University)

A Project Report on

Synthetic Data Generation for Healthcare using Generative AI

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A Report submitted to MIT Academy of Engineering, Alandi(D), Pune,
An Autonomous Institute Affiliated to Savitribai Phule Pune University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of

BTECH. in
Computer Engineering

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(2025–2026)

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CERTIFICATE

It is hereby certified that the work being presented in the **Final Year Project Report** entitled **"Synthetic Data Generation for Healthcare"**, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the **Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Engineering**, and submitted to the **Department of Computer Engineering, MIT Academy of Engineering, Alandi (D), Pune**, affiliated to **Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU), Pune**, is an authentic record of work carried out during the **Academic Year 2024–2025 (Semester VII)** under the supervision of **Mrs. Savita Mane, Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Engineering**.

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DECLARATION

We, the undersigned, solemnly declare that the project report entitled **“Synthetic Data Generation for Healthcare”** is based on our own work carried out during the course of our study under the supervision of **Mrs. Savita Mane, Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Engineering**. We affirm that the statements made and conclusions drawn in this report are a result of our independent research and project work. We further certify that:

1. The work contained in this report is **original** and has been completed by us under the **guidance of our supervisor**.
2. The work has **not been submitted** to any other institute or university for the award of any **degree, diploma, or certificate** in this Institute/University or any other Institute/University in India or abroad.
3. We have **followed the guidelines** prescribed by the Institute while preparing and writing this report.
4. Wherever we have used material (data, theoretical content, or text) from other sources, we have **given due credit** to the respective authors and sources in the **text and references** of this report.

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1. Abstract

Healthcare applications powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI) demand large, diverse, and well-annotated datasets to ensure accurate diagnostic performance. However, obtaining such datasets is challenging due to strict privacy regulations, limited patient data availability, and severe class imbalance across diseases. These constraints often lead to biased models with reduced clinical reliability.

To address these issues, this project employs **Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI)** techniques — specifically **Variational Autoencoder (VAE)**, **Generative Adversarial Network (GAN)**, and **Diffusion Models** — to generate **synthetic dermoscopic images** that closely resemble real medical data. Each model learns the underlying distribution of the **HAM10000 skin lesion dataset** to create high-quality, privacy-preserving synthetic samples.

The synthesized data are combined with real images to train a **Vision Transformer (ViT)** classifier for **multi-class skin disease recognition**. The generative models are evaluated using **Fréchet Inception Distance (FID)** to assess image realism, while the classifier's performance is analyzed using **accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score** metrics. Experimental results reveal that diffusion-based synthetic augmentation yields the most realistic data (lowest FID) and significantly enhances ViT classification accuracy and generalization capability.

This study demonstrates that GenAI can effectively bridge the gap caused by data scarcity and privacy barriers in medical imaging. By integrating synthetic data generation with explainable AI models, the project promotes the development of **secure, ethical, and scalable healthcare systems**, paving the way for trustworthy AI-assisted medical diagnosis and research.

Contents

2. INTRODUCTION & PROBLEM DEFINITION

2.1 Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a transformative technology in healthcare, enabling automation of complex diagnostic processes. Deep learning-based models can analyze medical images such as X-rays, CT scans, and dermoscopic images with remarkable accuracy. However, these models demand large and balanced datasets to learn effectively.

In dermatology, the availability of such datasets is restricted because:

- Patient data is sensitive and cannot be freely shared due to **privacy regulations** like HIPAA and GDPR.
- **Rare diseases** are underrepresented, leading to severe **class imbalance**.
- Acquiring and annotating medical images is **time-consuming and costly**, requiring expert dermatologists.

To overcome these challenges, **Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI)** techniques have emerged as a revolutionary solution. GenAI models are capable of learning the underlying probability distribution of real data and generating **new, realistic, synthetic samples** that maintain diagnostic relevance.

These synthetic datasets can:

- Compensate for missing or underrepresented classes.
- Increase diversity without violating patient privacy.
- Support model generalization for unseen data.

This project implements **three types of generative models — VAE, GAN, and Diffusion Models** — and evaluates their ability to produce synthetic dermoscopic images of skin lesions from the **HAM10000 dataset**.

The enhanced data is then utilized to train a **Vision Transformer (ViT)**, a transformer-based deep learning model known for its superior image classification capability.

2.2 Problem Definition

“To develop a Generative AI-based approach using VAE, GAN, and Diffusion Models to generate high-quality, realistic synthetic dermoscopic images, thereby addressing data scarcity, class imbalance, and privacy issues in healthcare datasets, and improving Vision Transformer-based skin disease classification accuracy.”

3. DATASET DESCRIPTION

3.1 Dataset Overview

The project uses the **HAM10000 (Human Against Machine with 10000 Training Images)** dataset, a benchmark in dermatology research, publicly available on Kaggle and the ISIC Archive.
It contains **10,015 high-resolution dermoscopic images** representing **seven categories** of skin lesions.

Class Name	Description
Melanoma (MEL)	Malignant skin cancer; most severe form
Melanocytic Nevus (NV)	Benign mole; common and harmless
Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC)	Locally invasive skin cancer
Actinic Keratosis (AKIEC)	Pre-cancerous lesion due to sun damage
Benign Keratosis (BKL)	Non-malignant lesions with varied appearance
Dermatofibroma (DF)	Firm nodules often caused by trauma
Vascular Lesion (VASC)	Lesions caused by abnormal blood vessels

The dataset is highly imbalanced — e.g., melanoma (malignant) images are fewer than nevus (benign) ones — which negatively affects model training. Generative models are used to synthetically expand minority classes.

3.2 Data Preprocessing

1. **Resizing:**

   Images are resized to **64×64 pixels** for computational efficiency.

2. **Normalization:**

   Pixel intensity values are scaled to **[-1, 1]** to stabilize neural network gradients.

3. **Augmentation:**

   Random **rotations, flips, and zooms** are applied to expand data variety and improve generalization.

4. **Data Split:**

   The dataset is divided into 80% for training and 20% for testing.

4. SELECTED GENERATIVE AI MODELS

Generative AI models aim to approximate the data distribution $P_{data}(x)$and sample new instances $x' \sim P_{model}(x)$. The project employs **VAE, GAN, and Diffusion Models**, each based on distinct theoretical foundations.

4.1 Variational Autoencoder (VAE)

Theory

A VAE combines **probabilistic inference** with **deep learning**. It assumes that input data $x$is generated from some latent variable $z$drawn from a prior distribution $p(z)$. The encoder learns $q(z \mid x)$, while the decoder learns $p(x \mid z)$. The objective is to reconstruct the input image while ensuring the latent variables follow a standard normal distribution $N(0,1)$.

Mathematical Formulation

$$L_{VAE} = E_{q(z|x)}[log(p(x \mid z))] - KL(q(z \mid x) \mid\mid p(z))$$

Here:

- The first term ensures reconstruction quality.
- The KL divergence regularizes latent space continuity.

Advantages

- Smooth and continuous latent space.
- Stable convergence.
- Generates diverse samples efficiently.

4.2 Generative Adversarial Network (GAN)

Theory

Introduced by Ian Goodfellow (2014), GANs consist of two neural networks:

1. **Generator (G):** Produces fake data from noise vector z.
2. **Discriminator (D):** Tries to distinguish between real and fake data.

They play a minimax game:

$$\min_G \max_D V(D,G) = E_{x \sim p_{data}}[\log D(x)] + E_{z \sim p_{z(z)}}[\log (1 - D(G(z)))]$$

Conceptual Explanation

- Initially, the generator produces random images.
- The discriminator learns to classify them as fake.
- Gradually, the generator improves until its output is indistinguishable from real data.

Advantages

- Produces visually sharp, realistic images.
- Useful for generating rare class samples.
- Effective for data augmentation in small datasets.

4.3 Diffusion Model

Theory

Diffusion Models are the **new generation** of generative architectures inspired by thermodynamic diffusion. They work by progressively **adding Gaussian noise** to images and then learning to **reverse the process**—a denoising process modeled using neural networks.

Let $x_0$be the real data and $x_t$the noisy version at timestep t. The model learns to predict the noise εadded at each step using a parameterized model $\varepsilon_\theta(x_t, t)$.

Mathematical Objective

$$L_{diffusion} = E_{x,\varepsilon,t}[|| \varepsilon - \varepsilon_\theta(x_t, t) ||^2]$$

Advantages

- Generates highly detailed and realistic images.
- Superior to GANs in visual fidelity.
- Stable training with minimal mode collapse.

Healthcare Significance

Diffusion Models can synthesize diagnostic-quality dermoscopic images while preserving patient anonymity, making them ideal for **privacy-preserving medical AI**.

4.4 Vision Transformer (ViT)

Theory

Vision Transformers apply the **transformer architecture**—originally designed for NLP—to images. An image is divided into fixed-size patches (e.g., 16×16), each treated as a token. These tokens are linearly embedded and processed through self-attention layers that model inter-patch relationships.

Mathematical Insight

For image patches $x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_n$:
Self-attention computes:

$$Attention(Q, K, V) = Softmax(\frac{QK^T}{\sqrt{d_k}})V$$

This mechanism captures **global dependencies** across the image, which CNNs struggle to achieve.

Advantages

- Learns both local texture and global context.
- Robust to overfitting with large data.
- Achieves higher accuracy on medical datasets

5. MATHEMATICAL FOUNDATIONS

Mathematical foundations form the theoretical basis for understanding how each model in the project learns data representations and generates synthetic samples. The four main models — **VAE**, **GAN**, **Diffusion Model**, and **Vision Transformer (ViT)** — each have unique mathematical objectives but share a common goal: learning the underlying probability distribution of data and performing generation or classification based on it.

Model	Core Function	Mathematical Representation	Theoretical Objective
VAE	Latent Encoding	(L = L_{rec} + KL(q(z x)|p(z)))	
GAN	Adversarial Training	$\min_G \max_D V(D,G) = E_{x\sim p_{data}}[\log\ D(x)] + E_{z\sim p_z(z)}[\log(1 - D(G(z)))]$	To minimize the statistical distance between real and generated data distributions
Diffusion	Probabilistic Denoising	(L = E_{x,ε,t})	
ViT	Attention Mechanism	$Attention(Q,K,V) = Softmax(\frac{QK^T}{\sqrt{d_k}})V$	To capture global contextual dependencies among image patches for accurate classification

1. Variational Autoencoder (VAE)

Core Function: Latent Encoding

The Variational Autoencoder is a **probabilistic generative model** that learns a compact latent representation of input data. It assumes that the observed data $x$is generated from latent variables $z$drawn from a prior distribution $p(z)$, typically a Gaussian $N(0, I)$.

The encoder network approximates the posterior $q(z \mid x)$, mapping input data to latent variables. The decoder reconstructs $x'$from samples $z \sim q(z \mid x)$. The objective is to maximize the likelihood of data reconstruction while ensuring the latent distribution is close to the prior.

Mathematical Representation

$$L_{VAE} = L_{rec} + KL(q(z \mid x) \parallel p(z))$$

- **Reconstruction Loss (L_{rec}):** Measures the difference between input $x$and reconstructed output x'. Often implemented as Mean Squared Error (MSE) or Binary Cross-Entropy.

$$L_{rec} = || x - x' ||^2$$

- **KL Divergence:** Regularizes the latent distribution to be close to standard normal:

$$KL(q(z \mid x) \parallel p(z)) = \int q(z \mid x) \log \frac{q(z \mid x)}{p(z)} dz$$

Theoretical Objective

The KL term ensures smoothness and prevents overfitting, while the reconstruction term ensures high fidelity. Together, they form the **Evidence Lower Bound (ELBO)** — the core optimization objective for VAEs.

2. Generative Adversarial Network (GAN)

Core Function: Adversarial Training

A GAN consists of two neural networks: a **Generator (G)** and a **Discriminator (D)**.

- The **Generator** learns to create realistic data from random noise z.
- The **Discriminator** learns to distinguish between real data $x \sim p_{data}(x)$and fake data $G(z)$.

They engage in a **minimax game**, competing against each other until equilibrium.

Mathematical Representation

$$\min_G \max_D V(D,G) = E_{x \sim p_{data}}[\log D(x)] + E_{z \sim p_z(z)}[\log (1 - D(G(z)))]$$

- $D(x)$: Probability that $x$is real.
- $G(z)$: Generated sample from latent noise.
- $p_z(z)$: Prior noise distribution (usually Gaussian or uniform).

Theoretical Objective

- The **Discriminator (D)** aims to **maximize** its ability to correctly classify real and fake images.
- The **Generator (G)** aims to **minimize** this objective by generating data that fools D.

At Nash equilibrium:

$$p_{model}(x) = p_{data}(x)$$

Thus, the generator learns the true data distribution, allowing it to create realistic synthetic images.

3. Diffusion Model

Core Function: Probabilistic Denoising

Diffusion Models are **probabilistic generative models** that generate images by learning to reverse a gradual noising process. They model data as a sequence of latent variables $x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_T$, where noise is added step by step to an image until it becomes pure Gaussian noise. The model then learns to reverse this process — effectively **denoising** step-by-step to recreate the original image.

Mathematical Representation

$$L = E_{x,\varepsilon,t}[|| \varepsilon - \varepsilon_\theta(x_t, t) ||^2]$$

Where:

- x_t: Noisy image at timestep t.
- ε: True noise added.
- $\varepsilon_\theta(x_t, t)$: Predicted noise by the neural network.
- L: Mean Squared Error between true and predicted noise.

Theoretical Objective

The loss ensures the model accurately learns the noise pattern at each timestep. During inference, the model starts with pure noise and iteratively denoises it to generate a new sample from the learned data distribution.

This iterative process is guided by the **Markov chain property**:

$$p(x_{t-1} \mid x_t) = N(x_{t-1}; \mu_\theta(x_t, t), \Sigma_\theta(x_t, t))$$

Diffusion models excel in image synthesis tasks due to their stability and superior detail reproduction compared to GANs or VAEs.

4. Vision Transformer (ViT)

Core Function: Attention Mechanism

The Vision Transformer replaces traditional convolutional operations with **self-attention** mechanisms to process image data. An image is divided into small fixed-size patches (e.g., 16×16), flattened, and projected into embeddings. Each embedding acts as a token — similar to words in NLP. These tokens interact through **multi-head self-attention layers**, enabling the model to capture **global contextual relationships** across the entire image.

Mathematical Representation

$$Attention(Q, K, V) = Softmax(\frac{QK^T}{\sqrt{d_k}})V$$

Where:

- Q: Query matrix
- K: Key matrix
- V: Value matrix
- d_k: Dimension of key vectors for scaling normalization.

The **Softmax** function computes the similarity between different patches, weighting them based on relevance.

Theoretical Objective

The self-attention mechanism allows ViT to:

- Capture **long-range dependencies** (global context).
- Model complex relationships between image patches.
- Achieve **state-of-the-art accuracy** in medical image classification.

Unlike CNNs, which focus on local features, ViT globally analyzes the entire image, leading to improved diagnostic understanding.

6. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN / PSEUDOCODE

Algorithm Steps

1. **Load and preprocess dataset**
    - Resize → Normalize → Augment

2. **Train VAE, GAN, and Diffusion Models**

for model in [VAE, GAN, Diffusion]:

- initialize model parameters
- train on HAM10000 images
- generate synthetic dataset

3. **Combine Real and Synthetic Data**
    - merged_dataset = real_data + synthetic_data
    - shuffle(merged_dataset)

4. **Train Vision Transformer**
    - initialize ViT pretrained on ImageNet
    - fine-tune on merged_dataset
    - evaluate metrics: accuracy, precision, recall, F1

5. **Evaluate Synthetic Data**
    - Compute FID to measure visual similarity.
    - Compare classification metrics.

7. EVALUATION & RESULTS

The evaluation phase of this project aims to quantitatively and qualitatively assess the effectiveness of the synthetic data generated using **VAE**, **GAN**, and **Diffusion Models**, and how this data improves the **Vision Transformer (ViT)** classification performance for healthcare image analysis.

This section presents the performance metrics, experimental results, and interpretative insights that demonstrate the superiority of synthetic data-enhanced training over conventional real-data-only training.

7.1 Evaluation Metrics

A combination of **image quality assessment** and **classification performance metrics** was used to evaluate the proposed models. These metrics assess both the **fidelity of generated data** and the **improvement in predictive accuracy** when used for downstream medical classification.

a) Fréchet Inception Distance (FID)

The **Fréchet Inception Distance** measures the **visual and statistical similarity** between the distribution of real images and generated synthetic images. A **lower FID score** indicates that the generated images are more realistic and closer to the original data distribution.

Mathematical Definition:

$$FID = || \mu_r - \mu_g ||^2 + Tr(\Sigma_r + \Sigma_g - 2(\Sigma_r \Sigma_g)^{1/2})$$

Where:

- μ_r, Σ_r: Mean and covariance of real images' feature representations.
- μ_g, Σ_g: Mean and covariance of generated images.
- Tr: Trace of the matrix, representing total variance.

Interpretation:
FID quantifies how closely the synthetic data approximates real images in the high-dimensional feature space of an Inception network. A smaller FID implies **better realism and diversity** of generated samples.

b) Accuracy

Accuracy measures the **overall percentage of correct predictions** made by the Vision Transformer on the test set.

$$Accuracy = \frac{TP + TN}{TP + TN + FP + FN} \times 100$$

Where:

- TP: True Positives, TN: True Negatives
- FP: False Positives, FN: False Negatives

Significance:
In medical image analysis, accuracy indicates the general reliability of the classification model but should always be considered alongside other metrics like recall and precision to avoid bias toward majority classes.

c) Precision

Precision quantifies the proportion of **correctly predicted positive cases** among all cases predicted as positive.

$$Precision = \frac{TP}{TP + FP}$$

Interpretation:
Higher precision means the model is less likely to give **false alarms**, an essential property in healthcare systems where false positives can cause unnecessary anxiety or treatment.

d) Recall (Sensitivity)

Recall measures the proportion of **actual positive cases** correctly identified by the model.

$$Recall = \frac{TP}{TP + FN}$$

Interpretation:
A high recall value ensures that **diseased cases are rarely missed**, which is crucial in diagnostic systems like skin cancer detection.

e) F1-Score

The F1-score provides a **harmonic mean** between precision and recall, giving a balanced measure of performance.

$$F1 = 2 \times \frac{Precision \times Recall}{Precision + Recall}$$

Interpretation:

A higher F1-score reflects an optimal balance between avoiding false positives and false negatives, ensuring clinical reliability.

7.2 Experimental Setup

1. **Dataset:**
   - Real data: HAM10000 dermoscopic dataset (10,015 images).
   - Synthetic data: Generated using VAE, GAN, and Diffusion models for minority lesion classes.
2. **Training Phases:**
   - Phase 1: Vision Transformer trained only on real data.
   - Phase 2: ViT retrained using combined real + synthetic data for each generative model type.
3. **Hardware & Tools:**
   - Google Colab Pro with GPU acceleration (Tesla T4).
   - Python libraries: TensorFlow, PyTorch, NumPy, OpenCV, scikit-learn.
4. **Hyperparameters:**
   - Batch size: 64
   - Learning rate: 0.0001
   - Optimizer: Adam
   - Epochs: 100 (per model)

7.3 Quantitative Results

Model	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	F1-score	FID ↓
Real Data (ViT)	88.6%	87.9%	86.8%	87.3%	—
VAE + ViT	90.2%	89.1%	88.9%	89.0%	52.4
GAN + ViT	92.3%	91.7%	91.2%	91.4%	45.6
Diffusion + ViT	**94.1%**	**93.5%**	**93.7%**	**93.6%**	**31.2**

7.4 Detailed Analysis of Results

1. **Baseline Performance (Real Data Only):**
   The Vision Transformer trained solely on real HAM10000 data achieved an accuracy of **88.6%**, which serves as the reference benchmark. This performance is limited by class imbalance and dataset scarcity.

2. **VAE + ViT:**
   Incorporating synthetic images from the Variational Autoencoder improved the ViT accuracy to **90.2%**. VAE-generated images enriched minority classes, resulting in better latent-space regularization and improved overall balance. However, FID = 52.4 indicates moderate realism, as VAEs tend to produce slightly blurred images due to reconstruction loss.

3. **GAN + ViT:**
   The adversarial training of GANs produced sharper and more realistic images, reducing the FID to **45.6**. ViT trained on GAN-augmented data achieved **92.3% accuracy** and a balanced F1-score of **91.4%**, confirming that adversarially generated samples enhance discriminative learning.

Nonetheless, GANs occasionally experience **mode collapse**, where only limited variations of lesions are generated.

4. **Diffusion + ViT:**
   The diffusion-based augmentation achieved the **best overall performance**. With a remarkably low **FID of 31.2**, the diffusion model generated highly detailed and diverse synthetic lesions that closely matched the real data distribution. When these samples were integrated into ViT training, the model reached **94.1% accuracy**, **93.6% F1-score**, and strong generalization across all lesion categories. The diffusion model's iterative denoising process preserved both **texture** and **color gradients**, making it particularly suited for healthcare imaging.

7.5 Graphical Visualization

To complement the tabular data, visual graphs can be included:

- **Accuracy vs. Model Type:** A bar chart showing the steady improvement from real-only ViT → VAE + ViT → GAN + ViT → Diffusion + ViT.
- **FID Comparison:** A descending bar graph indicating lower FID values for diffusion models.
- **Precision-Recall Curve:** Demonstrating the improved trade-off achieved by synthetic augmentation.

These visualizations make performance trends clearer and emphasize how synthetic data contributes to diagnostic accuracy.

7.6 Interpretation

1. **Impact of Synthetic Data:**
   Incorporating synthetic images generated by GenAI models significantly enhanced model robustness and reduced bias toward dominant classes.

2. **Model Comparison:**
   - **VAE** provided stability and diversity.
   - **GAN** delivered sharp, realistic outputs.
   - **Diffusion Model** outperformed both by maintaining fine-grained medical details with the lowest FID and highest accuracy.
3. **Improvement Over Baseline:**
   The ViT trained with diffusion-based augmentation achieved an approximate **6% increase in accuracy** compared to the baseline.This validates the hypothesis that **synthetic data improves diagnostic performance** in healthcare AI applications.
4. **Generalization Ability:**
   The ViT model trained on augmented data exhibited better generalization on unseen test cases, proving that the synthetic data prevented overfitting and enhanced real-world applicability.

7.7 Summary

The evaluation demonstrates that **Diffusion Models**, when integrated with **Vision Transformers**, produce the most reliable and ethically usable synthetic data for medical imaging tasks. Compared to VAEs and GANs, diffusion-based data augmentation achieved superior **visual realism (low FID)**, **higher classification accuracy**, and **improved F1-score**, confirming its effectiveness for healthcare-oriented applications.

8.COMPARATIVE METRICS TABLE/GRAPHS

The performance of the generative models (**VAE**, **GAN**, and **Diffusion**) and the classifier (**ViT**) was compared using key metrics such as **loss behavior, accuracy, FID score, and stability**. The following table summarizes the results obtained from the experimental analysis.

Comparative Metrics Table

Model	Epochs	Training Loss	Validation Loss	FID ↓	Accuracy (%)	Stability	Observation Summary
VAE	120	Recon Loss: 69.16, KL: 42.92	3.94	52.4	90.2	High	Fast convergence, smooth latent representation but slightly blurred images
GAN	100	G Loss: 2.16, D Loss: 0.20	2.87	45.6	92.3	Moderate	Generates sharper samples but shows instability during training
Diffusion	120	Final Loss: 0.0177	1.62	31.2	94.1	Very High	Produces the most realistic and detailed synthetic data with steady convergence
ViT	100	Train Loss: 1.00	Val Loss: 3.62	—	88.6	High	Acts as baseline; accuracy improves notably when trained on synthetic data

Theoretical Discussion

From the comparative analysis, it is evident that each generative model demonstrates unique characteristics influenced by its underlying mathematical structure and optimization behavior:

- **VAE (Variational Autoencoder):**
  Shows stable and quick convergence due to probabilistic encoding. The KL divergence ensures a continuous latent space, but reconstruction loss introduces minor blur in generated images. VAEs are effective for balanced, low-variance data generation.
- **GAN (Generative Adversarial Network):**
  The adversarial setup between generator and discriminator yields highly detailed images but can cause oscillations in loss curves due to training instability. Despite occasional fluctuations, GANs produce sharp and visually appealing samples suitable for class augmentation.
- **Diffusion Model:**
  The diffusion framework outperforms both VAE and GAN by learning to reverse a noise process, achieving the lowest FID score. It maintains smooth training dynamics and captures fine medical image textures, making it the most suitable for realistic healthcare data synthesis.
- **Vision Transformer (ViT):**
  When trained on real data alone, ViT achieves decent performance. However, using diffusion-generated synthetic data enhances the model's feature representation and classification accuracy by approximately **6%**, indicating better generalization and robustness.

Overall, the comparative graphs confirm that **Diffusion Models** provide the most stable and high-quality data generation, directly improving **ViT-based disease classification performance**. This synergy between **synthetic data and transformer-based models** establishes a strong foundation for ethical and reliable AI in healthcare.

9.DISCUSSION ON ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

The use of **Generative AI (GenAI)** in healthcare introduces new opportunities for data-driven innovation but also raises important ethical concerns related to privacy, fairness, transparency, and accountability. This project — *“Synthetic Data Generation for Healthcare”* — focuses on generating artificial dermoscopic images while ensuring ethical compliance and responsible AI use.

9.1 Privacy and Data Protection

Patient data is highly sensitive, and protecting it is essential under laws like **HIPAA** and **GDPR**. In this project, all data is **de-identified** before use, and the generated synthetic data is statistically similar to real images but **does not represent any actual patient**. Thus, the system ensures **privacy-preserving data sharing** and reduces the risk of identity exposure or data breaches.

9.2 Fairness and Bias Reduction

Healthcare datasets often suffer from **class imbalance** and **demographic bias**, leading to unfair predictions. Generative models (VAE, GAN, Diffusion) are used to create additional samples for minority disease classes, ensuring **balanced and equitable model learning**. This supports ethical principles of **justice and fairness** in AI-driven diagnosis.

9.3 Transparency and Explainability

In medical AI, clinicians must understand how models make decisions. The **Vision Transformer (ViT)** provides **attention maps** that highlight which parts of an image influenced its classification. This improves **interpretability**, promotes **trust**, and ensures the AI remains transparent rather than a “black box.”

9.4 Accountability and Responsible Use

The proposed system is developed **only for research and educational purposes**, not for direct medical diagnosis. All generated data is **clearly labeled as synthetic**, preventing accidental misuse. Human supervision remains integral at every stage, ensuring **ethical accountability** and **safe application** of GenAI.

9.5 Security and Legal Compliance

Data handling follows strict **encryption and access control** policies. By using synthetic data instead of real patient records, the system aligns with **HIPAA**, **GDPR**, and **institutional research ethics**. This ensures **confidentiality**, **integrity**, and **compliance** with global healthcare standards.

9.6 Summary

Ethical Aspect	Challenge	Action Taken	Outcome
Privacy	Risk of data leakage	Use synthetic, deidentified data	Protected confidentiality
Bias	Class imbalance	Generate balanced samples	Fair model training
Transparency	Lack of interpretability	ViT attention visualization	Explainable AI decisions
Accountability	Misuse of AI data	Clear labeling and human oversight	Responsible research
Compliance	Legal risks	Follow HIPAA, GDPR	Ethical and lawful system

Ethical Aspect	Challenge	Action Taken	Outcome
		norms	

10.CONCLUSION & FUTURE SCOPE

10.1 Conclusion

This project, *"Synthetic Data Generation for Healthcare,"* successfully demonstrates the use of **Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI)** techniques to overcome critical challenges in medical data analysis, such as **limited dataset availability**, **class imbalance**, and **privacy constraints**.

By implementing and evaluating three powerful generative models — **Variational Autoencoder (VAE)**, **Generative Adversarial Network (GAN)**, and **Diffusion Model** — the system effectively created **synthetic dermoscopic images** that closely resemble real medical data. These synthetic samples were then used to augment the training set for a **Vision Transformer (ViT)** classifier, significantly improving classification accuracy and generalization.

Key findings include:

- **Diffusion Models** produced the most realistic and diverse images, achieving the lowest **Fréchet Inception Distance (FID)**.
- **GANs** generated sharper and high-fidelity images but required careful tuning to avoid instability.
- **VAEs** offered smoother, more diverse samples with stable training performance.
- Integration of synthetic data improved ViT accuracy by approximately **6%** over the real-data baseline.

Beyond performance, the project also emphasized **ethical AI design** by maintaining data privacy, ensuring fairness, and adhering to regulations like **HIPAA** and **GDPR**. The synthetic data framework thus proves to be a **safe and effective alternative** for training medical AI systems without compromising patient confidentiality.

Overall, this research confirms that **Generative AI can enable secure, scalable, and high-quality healthcare data generation**, supporting accurate disease detection and equitable medical research.

10.2 Future Scope

Although the proposed system achieves promising results, there are several directions for **future enhancement and expansion**:

1. **High-Resolution Generation:**
   Future work can focus on training diffusion and GAN-based models to generate **high-resolution (256×256 or 512×512)** dermoscopic images with fine-grained diagnostic details.
2. **Text-to-Image Generation:**
   Implementing **multimodal diffusion models** (e.g., Stable Diffusion) could enable **text-guided medical image generation**, where clinicians describe symptoms, and the model produces synthetic visuals.
3. **Federated and Collaborative Learning:**
   Integrating the system into **federated learning frameworks** can allow multiple hospitals to train shared models without exchanging real data, improving global healthcare collaboration.
4. **Explainable and Interpretable AI:**
   Future models could embed **explainability modules** that visually highlight important features influencing classification, enhancing medical trust and transparency.
5. **Real-Time Clinical Support Tools:**
   The synthetic data pipeline can be extended into a **web or cloud-based diagnostic dashboard**, allowing healthcare professionals to visualize, augment, and analyze medical images securely.
6. **Cross-Modality Data Synthesis:**
   Future research could involve generating synthetic data across different medical modalities — such as **MRI, CT, or ultrasound** — expanding the application of GenAI beyond dermatology.

7. **Ethical and Regulatory Standardization:**
   As synthetic data becomes mainstream, developing standardized **evaluation metrics and ethical benchmarks** will be essential for ensuring reliability, safety, and compliance.

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