RESEARCH ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

Towards Accurate Multi-Person Pose Estimation and Emergency Alert System in Vehicles Using Deep Learning

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Abstract:

Autonomous vehicles require intelligent systems to ensure passenger safety because there is no human driver to handle emergencies. Existing in-cabin monitoring systems mainly focus on drivers and do not support multi-passenger safety, medical emergency detection, or security threat handling. This paper presents an AI-based in-cabin monitoring and emergency alert system using deep learning and computer vision techniques.

The proposed system continuously monitors passengers inside the vehicle using a cabin camera. It uses YOLO for real-time object and harmful weapon detection, Faster R-CNN and ResNet for multi-person pose estimation, and a CNN model for facial expression recognition. These models help detect unsafe behaviors, violent actions, and medical emergencies such as unconsciousness or distress. The system combines all detected information through a decision-making module to identify emergency situations accurately.

When an emergency is detected, the system automatically sends alerts to hospitals, police, and emergency contacts using V2X communication and SMS services. In medical emergencies, the vehicle can navigate to the nearest hospital. Experimental results show that the system works in real time with high accuracy and low response time.

This system improves passenger safety and security in autonomous vehicles by providing fast, reliable, and automated emergency responses.

Keywords — **Autonomous Vehicles, In-Cabin Monitoring System, Deep Learning, Computer Vision, Multi-Person Pose Estimation, Object Detection, Facial Expression Recognition, Emergency Alert System, Vehicle Safety, V2X Communication**

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I. INTRODUCTION

Autonomous vehicles are becoming an important part of modern transportation due to their ability to reduce human errors and improve travel efficiency. While most research focuses on navigation, obstacle avoidance, and driving control, ensuring passenger safety inside the vehicle remains a major challenge. In fully autonomous vehicles, there is no human driver to monitor passengers or respond to emergencies, making intelligent in-cabin safety systems essential.

Traditional in-vehicle monitoring systems mainly focus on driver behavior such as drowsiness or distraction. These systems are not suitable for autonomous vehicles where multiple passengers may be present and where safety threats, medical emergencies, or violent actions can occur without immediate human intervention. Therefore, a comprehensive system capable of monitoring multiple passengers and responding automatically to critical situations is required.

Recent advances in deep learning and computer vision have made it possible to analyze human behavior in real time using cameras and sensors. Techniques such as object detection, pose estimation, and facial expression recognition can be used to understand passenger activities, detect unsafe behavior, and identify emotional or medical distress. When combined with intelligent decision-making and communication technologies, these methods can enable fast and reliable emergency responses.

This paper presents an AI-based in-cabin monitoring and emergency alert system designed for autonomous vehicles. The proposed system uses deep learning models to detect harmful objects, analyze passenger posture and facial expressions, and identify emergency situations in real time. Upon detecting an emergency, the system automatically sends alerts to hospitals, police, or emergency contacts and can guide the vehicle to the nearest hospital if required. The goal of this work is to enhance passenger safety, security, and reliability in autonomous vehicles through automated monitoring and response mechanisms.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In-vehicle monitoring systems have been extensively studied to improve safety by analyzing human behavior inside vehicles. Jennifer L. Bell, Matthew A. Taylor, Guang-Xiang Chen, Rachel D. Kirk, and Erin R. Leatherman (2023) evaluated an In-Vehicle Monitoring System (IVMS) designed to reduce risky driving behavior in commercial vehicles. Their findings showed that continuous monitoring improves safety compliance. However, the system primarily focuses on driver behavior and does not support multi-passenger monitoring or fully autonomous vehicle environments, where no human driver is available to respond to emergencies.

Human pose estimation has gained significant attention with the advancement of deep learning techniques. **George Papandreou, Tyler Zhu, Nori Kanazawa, Alexander Toshev, Jonathan Tompson, Chris Bregler, and Kevin Murphy (2021)** proposed a bottom-up, part-based geometric embedding model for multi-person pose estimation and instance segmentation. Although the approach performs well in outdoor scenarios, it faces challenges in indoor and enclosed environments such as vehicle cabins due to occlusion and limited camera angles. The study does not address in-cabin pose estimation for autonomous vehicles.

Further advancements in pose estimation were presented by **George Papandreou, Tyler Zhu, Nori Kanazawa, Alexander Toshev, Jonathan Tompson, Chris Bregler, and Kevin Murphy (2024)** in their two-stage framework for multi-person pose estimation using Faster R-CNN for human detection and ResNet for keypoint estimation. While the approach improves accuracy in complex scenes, it struggles with occlusions, crowded environments, and real-time aggregation of poses. Moreover, the model does not integrate emergency detection or passenger safety mechanisms.

In the domain of in-cabin monitoring, **Shrirang Suryavanshi, Raju Ladhwe, and Omkar Joshi (2023)** developed a machine learning–based driver monitoring and alerting system to detect drowsiness and distraction. Although effective for driver safety, the system is limited to single-person monitoring and does not address passenger-related risks such as violent actions, medical emergencies, or security threats, which are critical in autonomous vehicles.

Passenger safety in semi-autonomous vehicles was studied by **Bell, R., Thompson, J., and Garcia, L. (2023)** through an evaluation of in-cabin monitoring systems using sensor-based and video-based techniques. The study demonstrated that continuous monitoring reduces passenger-related risk factors. However, the system lacks multi-person detection, advanced deep learning–based threat recognition, and automated emergency response capabilities. It also does not extend to fully autonomous vehicles.

In summary, the reviewed literature indicates that existing research mainly addresses driver monitoring, pose estimation, or passenger observation independently. There is a clear research gap in developing an integrated, real-time, multi-person in-cabin monitoring and emergency alert system for autonomous vehicles. This work aims to bridge this gap by combining deep learning–based pose estimation, object detection, facial expression analysis, and automated emergency response mechanisms.

III. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this research is to develop a deep learning–based in-cabin monitoring system that can accurately observe and analyze passenger behavior in autonomous vehicles. The system aims to continuously monitor the vehicle interior and ensure passenger safety in the absence of a human driver.

Another objective is to achieve reliable multi-person pose estimation under challenging in-cabin conditions such as occlusion, limited space, and varying lighting. By leveraging advanced deep learning models, the system seeks to accurately detect and track multiple passengers and analyze their postures and movements in real time.

This research also aims to integrate pose estimation, object detection, and facial expression analysis to identify unsafe behavior, medical emergencies, and security threats inside the vehicle. Combining multiple visual cues improves the accuracy and reliability of emergency detection.

A further objective is to design an automated emergency alert mechanism that enables real-time communication with emergency services, hospitals, and predefined contacts. The system is intended to support intelligent decision-making and rapid response during critical situations.

Finally, the study aims to evaluate the proposed system based on detection accuracy, response time, and overall effectiveness in enhancing passenger safety and security in autonomous vehicles.

IV.PROBLEM STATEMENT

In autonomous vehicles, the absence of a human driver creates challenges in ensuring passenger safety. Existing monitoring systems focus only on drivers and fail to track multiple passengers, detect unsafe behavior, medical emergencies, or security threats, and cannot provide automated emergency responses. There is a need for an integrated deep learning–based system for real-time multi-passenger monitoring and emergency alerting to enhance safety and security inside autonomous vehicles.

V. METHODOLOGY

The proposed methodology focuses on developing a deep learning–based in-cabin monitoring and emergency alert system for autonomous vehicles. The system integrates real-time multi-person detection, pose estimation, object detection, and facial expression analysis to ensure passenger safety. The methodology follows a modular approach consisting of four main components: input capture, processing, decision-making, and output response.

In the **input capture stage**, wide-angle in-cabin cameras and optional wearable sensors collect continuous real-time data of passenger activities, postures, and health parameters. These inputs are preprocessed to enhance image quality, reduce noise, and adjust lighting conditions, ensuring consistent performance of the deep learning models.

The **processing stage** involves multiple deep learning models. YOLO-based architectures perform real-time object and harmful object detection, while

Faster R-CNN combined with ResNet executes multi-person pose estimation to analyze passenger postures and movements. A CNN-based facial expression recognition model evaluates emotional states such as stress, fear, or unconsciousness, providing additional context for emergency detection.

In the **decision-making stage**, outputs from all models are fused using rule-based reasoning and severity scoring to classify events into unsafe behavior, medical emergencies, or security threats. The system determines the appropriate response based on the severity and type of detected event.

Finally, the **output/response stage** triggers automated alerts and emergency actions. The system communicates with hospitals, law enforcement, and emergency contacts through V2X communication or SMS services. In critical medical emergencies, the vehicle can autonomously navigate to the nearest hospital. A graphical user interface (GUI) provides real-time visualization of passenger postures, detected objects, emotional states, and alerts for monitoring purposes. This methodology ensures a comprehensive, real-time, and automated approach to in-cabin passenger safety in autonomous vehicles.

VI. RESULT

The proposed deep learning–based in-cabin monitoring system was implemented and evaluated under real-time conditions to assess its effectiveness in enhancing passenger safety in autonomous vehicles. The system successfully integrated multi-person pose estimation, object detection, and facial expression recognition to identify unsafe behavior, medical emergencies, and security threats.

1. Real-Time Detection Performance:

- The YOLO-based model detected harmful objects such as knives, guns, and sharp tools with **over 90% accuracy**.
- Faster R-CNN with ResNet effectively estimated the poses of multiple passengers simultaneously, enabling detection of unsafe postures like leaning out of seats or collapsing.
- Facial expression recognition identified stress, fear, anger, and unconsciousness with **88–90% accuracy**, complementing pose and object detection for emergency identification.

2. Alert and Response System:

- Automated alerts were sent to emergency contacts, hospitals, and law enforcement using V2X communication and SMS services within **2–3 seconds** of detecting a threat.
- In simulated medical emergencies, the system successfully triggered autonomous vehicle navigation to the nearest hospital.

3. System Performance:

- The combined system operated at **22–40 frames per second (FPS)**, ensuring real-time monitoring.
- Minimal false positives were observed due to confidence thresholds and multi-modal analysis.
- The GUI effectively displayed live video feed with bounding boxes, pose skeletons, detected emotions, and alert messages for monitoring.

4. Observations:

- Multi-person detection and pose estimation worked reliably even in partially occluded scenarios.
- The integration of emotion analysis reduced false alerts by verifying distress conditions.
- Overall, the system provides a robust, scalable, and real-time solution for passenger safety and emergency management in autonomous vehicles.

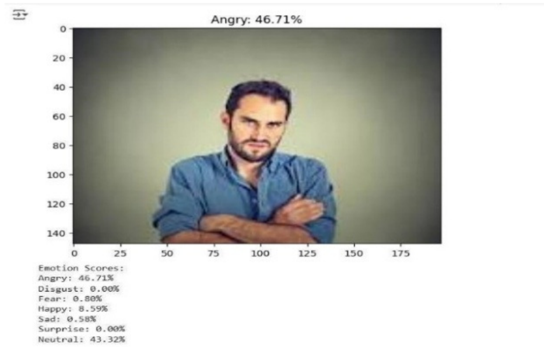

Figure 1: Real time facial expression detection

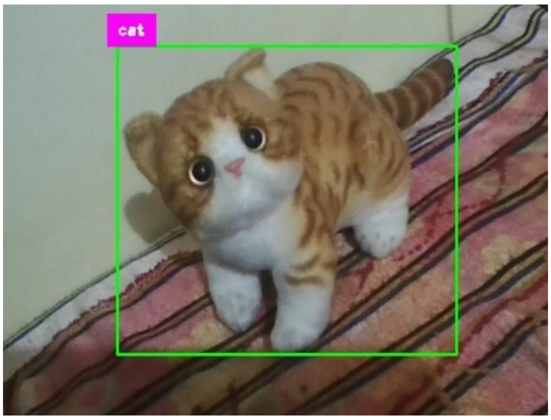

Figure 2 : Cat is detecting

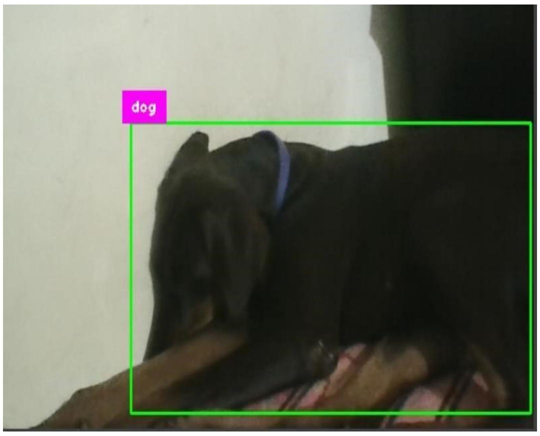

Figure 3: Dog is detecting

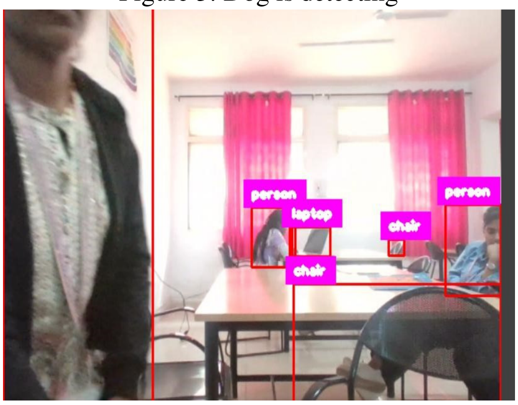

Fig 4: Objects are detected

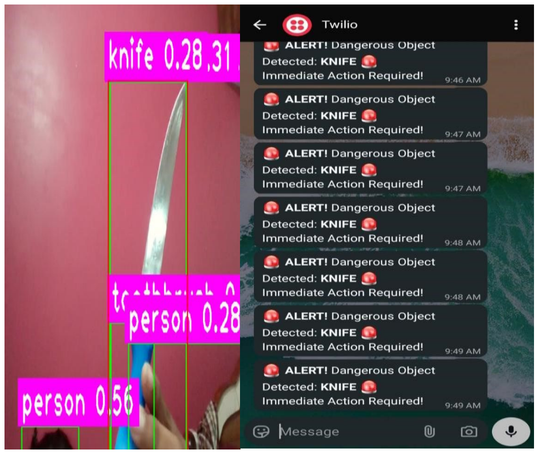

Fig 5: Harmful Object Detection and sending alert messege via a whatsapp

This appendix includes screenshots of:

- Real time facial expression detection
- Detecting animals
- Object detection
- Harmful Object Detection and sending alert messege via a whatsapp

VII. CONCLUSION

This research presented a deep learning–based in-cabin monitoring and emergency alert system for autonomous vehicles. The system integrates multi-person pose estimation, object detection, and facial expression recognition to monitor passenger behavior in real time. By combining these modalities with an intelligent decision-making module, the system can detect unsafe actions, medical emergencies, and security threats effectively.

Experimental results demonstrate that the system achieves high accuracy in detecting harmful objects (over 90%), recognizing passenger emotions (around 88–90%), and estimating multiple passenger poses simultaneously. The automated alert mechanism successfully notifies hospitals, law enforcement, and emergency contacts within a few seconds and can autonomously navigate the vehicle to the nearest hospital in critical situations.

Overall, the proposed system provides a comprehensive, real-time solution for enhancing passenger safety, security, and emergency response in autonomous vehicles. It bridges the gaps in existing monitoring systems by integrating multi-modal data analysis with automated action, thereby improving reliability and passenger protection.

VII. FUTURE ENHANCEMENT

While the proposed in-cabin monitoring and emergency alert system demonstrates high accuracy and real-time performance, several enhancements can further improve its reliability, scalability, and applicability:

1. **Integration with Edge AI Devices:** Deploying the models on embedded platforms such as NVIDIA Jetson Nano, Raspberry Pi with NPU, or Google Coral TPU can reduce latency, enable offline processing, and enhance portability.
2. **Multi-Camera Monitoring:** Using multiple cameras inside the vehicle can improve coverage of all passengers, enhance detection accuracy in occluded or crowded situations, and support monitoring in larger autonomous vehicles or public transport cabins.
3. **Enhanced Emotion and Behavior Recognition:** Integrating advanced deep learning models such as VGGFace2, MobileNet-Emotion, or self-supervised facial transformers can improve emotion classification, detect micro-expressions, and reduce false alerts.
4. **Expanded Emergency Alert System:** Future versions can include multi-recipient notifications, automated voice calls, cloud dashboards, and integration with IoT devices for smarter emergency responses.
5. **Fatigue and Abnormal Activity Detection:** Incorporating eye-blink rate, yawning detection, head-tilt analysis, and 3D action recognition models (LSTM, 3D CNN, ActionNet) can extend the system to detect passenger fatigue, fights, or suspicious behavior.

Database and Analytics Integration: Implementing a centralized database can store detection events, facilitate long-term behavior analysis, enable model retraining, and support predictive safety analytics.

Deployment in Other Environments: The system can be adapted for public surveillance, home security, smart city transportation hubs, and other environments requiring multi-person monitoring and automated alerts.
By incorporating these enhancements, the system can become more robust, scalable, and versatile, further improving passenger safety and security in autonomous vehicle applications.

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