

## Wearable Recognition System for Emotional States Using Physiological Devices

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**Abstract**— Recognizing emotional states is becoming a major part of a user's context for wearable computing applications. The system should be able to acquire a user's emotional states by using physiological sensors. We want to develop a personal emotional states recognition system that is practical, reliable, and can be used for health-care related applications. We propose to use the eHealth platform [1] which is a ready-made, light weight, small and easy to use device for recognizing a few emotional states like 'Sad', 'Dislike', 'Joy', 'Stress', 'Normal', 'No-Idea', 'Positive' and 'Negative' using decision tree (J48) classifier. In this paper, we present an approach to build a system that exhibits this property and provides evidence based on data for 8 different emotional states collected from 24 different subjects. Our results indicate that the system has an accuracy rate of approximately 98%. In our work, we used four physiological sensors i.e. 'Blood Volume Pulse' (BVP), 'Electromyogram' (EMG), 'Galvanic Skin Response' (GSR), and 'Skin Temperature' in order to recognize emotional states (i.e. stress, joy/happy, sad, normal/neutral, dislike, no-idea, positive and negative).

**Keywords**- Emotional states; Physiological devices; International Affective Picture System; Machine learning classifier; User studies.

### I. INTRODUCTION

It is hard to express your own emotions; no one can accurately measure the degree of his/her emotional state. According to Darwin, "...the young and the old of widely different races, both with man and animals, express the same state of mind by the same movement" [16]. According to Paul Ekman, there are seven basic emotions which are fear, surprise, sad, dislike, disgrace, disgust and joy [14]. The concept behind emotional states (also known as affective computing) was first introduced by Rosalind Picard in 1995 [2]. Since then the affective computing group have produced novel and innovative projects in that domain [3]. Emotional states recognition has received attention in recent years and is able to support the health care industry. Emotions and physical health have a strong link in influencing the immune system too [15]. Due to untreated, chronic stress; occurrence of an emotional disorder is more than 50% [6]. According to Richmond Hypnosis Center, due to stress; 110 million people die every year. That means, every 2 seconds, 7 people die [4]. According to American Psychological Association, in 2011 about 53 percent of Americans claimed stress as a reason behind personal health problems [5]. According to WebMD, intense and long term anger causes mental health problems including anxiety, depression, self-

harm, high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, colds and flu, stroke, gastro-intestinal problems, and cancer [6]. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) reported that stress is a threat for the workplace. Stress costs American industry more than \$300 billion annually [6]. According to Dr. Alexander G. Justicz, in the 21st century, stress is a huge problem for men [9]. Stress affects our health negatively, causing headaches, stomach problems, sleep problems, and migraines. Stress can cause many mouth problems, the painful TMJ (temporomandibular joint) syndrome, and tooth loss [7]. "Stress has an immediate effect on your body. In the short term, that's not necessarily a bad thing, but chronic stress puts your health at risk" [8]. Long term and intense anger can be caused of mental health problems including depression, anxiety and self-harm. It can also be caused of "high blood pressure", "cold and flu", "coronary heart disease", "stroke", "cancer" and "gastro-intestinal problems"[13]. "If you have a destructive reaction to anger, you are more likely to have heart attacks" [12] whereas "an upward-spiral dynamic continually reinforces the tie between positive emotions and physical health"[17].

Modern day lifestyle has led to various physical and mental diseases such as diabetes, depression and heart diseases as well. Although the negative effects of stress are known to people, they choose (deliberately or otherwise) to ignore it. They need to be forcefully notified, that they must shrug off negative emotions; either by sending them calls or some video clips/text messages/games [10]. Emotions are the feelings which influence the human organs. According to number of studies, negative thinking or depression can adversely affect your health [19]. Probably automatic and personal applications can be very helpful if it can monitor one's emotional states and persuade people to come out of negative emotional states. According to William Atkinson; "The best way to overcome undesirable or negative thoughts and feelings is to cultivate the positive ones" [18]. Emotional recognition technology can tackle this problem as it is able to monitor an individual's emotional states. This kind of system can also send an alarming call to a person when he is in a negative emotional state for long time or notify the caregivers or family members. The system can also log an individual's emotional states for later analysis. In some cases, especially in heart diseases, emotional states are also required along with the physical activities and physiological information for doctors in order to examine their patient's conditions when he is away from the doctor's clinic [11].

Emotional computing is a field of human computer interaction where a system has the ability to recognize emotions and react accordingly. We want to develop a

system for recognizing emotional states using physiological sensors which should be able to identify a few emotional states like sad, dislike, joy, stress, normal, no-idea, positive and negative. In our research we want to prove that it is possible to recognize the aforementioned emotional states by using physiological sensors.

## II. RELATED WORK

Recognizing emotional states by using automated systems have increased in recent years. Researchers developed systems for recognizing emotional states using speech [23, 24, and 25], facial expressions [26, 27, and 28] and physiological devices [20, 21, 22, 29, and 30]. In this research, we want to recognize different emotional states using body worn physiological devices (EMG, BVP, GSR and temperature). Researchers used physiological devices in order to recognize for different emotional states like sad [20, 21, 22, 30], joy/happy [20, 21, 22, 30, 31], normal/neutral [21, 30, 31], negative [29] etc. However, the aforementioned researches have used different physiological devices in their work. For example; some researchers recognized emotional states using EEG (Electroencephalogram), GSR and pulse sensor and they recognized joy, anger, sad, fear and relax. Audio and visual clips were used as a stimulus for eliciting the emotions [20]. Some researchers recognized emotional states using ECG (Electrocardiography) and they recognized 'Happiness', 'Sad', 'Fear', 'Surprise', 'Disgust' and 'Neutral'. Audio and visual clips were used as a stimulus for eliciting the emotions [21]. Some researchers recognized emotional states using ECG, EMG, skin conductance, respiration sensor and they recognized Joy, anger, Sadness and Pleasure. Music songs were used as a stimulus for eliciting the emotions [22]. In another case, researchers gathered the data from the "blood volume pulse", "electromyogram", "respiration" and the "skin conductance sensor". They conducted 20 experiments in 20 consecutive days, testing around 25 minutes per day on each individual. They figured out neutral, anger, hate, grief, love, romantic, joy and reverence emotion states from the data. They got 81% classification accuracy among the eight states [31]. Different techniques can be used as a stimulus for eliciting the emotions i.e. pictures, video clips, audio clips, games etc. In our work, we used International Affective Picture System (IAPS) for stimulation. IAPS is widely used in experiments studying emotion and attention. The International Affective Picture System (IAPS) provides normative emotional stimuli for emotion and attention under experimental investigations. The IAPS (pronounced eye-aps) is being produced and distributed by the Center for Emotion and Attention (CSEA) at the University of Florida [32]. In our previous work, we took two physiological sensors (i.e. BVP and GSR) for the analysis, IAPS were used as a stimulus and our system was able to recognize few emotional states with good accuracy [44]. In this paper, we used four physiological sensors in order to recognize few emotional states. The above mentioned researchers used different parts of the body but in our research we used only left arm for the sensor placement.

## III. HYPOTHESIS

The physiological data measured by wearable devices (EMG, blood volume pulse, temperature and skin conductance sensor) indicate a person's emotional state ('Sad', 'Dislike', 'Joy', 'Stress', 'Normal', 'No-Idea', 'Positive' and 'Negative') using a machine learning classifier.

## IV. EXPERIMENTAL METHODOLOGY

We developed the following systems for the user study.

### A. eHealth platform and application

We used eHealth platform [1] in order to recognize emotional states (Figure 1) and connected Raspberry Pi [41] to eHealth platform as shown in Figure 2.



Figure 1. eHealth platform

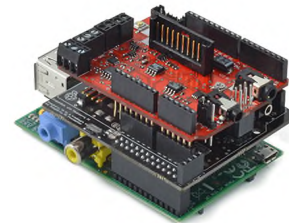


Figure 2. Raspberri pi with eHealth platform

The eHealth sensor comes with few sensors like 2D Accelerometer sensor, Blood pressure sensor (Breathing), Pulse and oxygen in blood sensor, body temperature sensor, airflow sensor, Electrocardiogram sensor (ECG), Electromyography sensor (EMG) and Galvanic skin response sensor. We used Galvanic skin response sensor, body temperature sensor, Electromyography sensor (EMG) and we used another blood volume pulse sensor [40] as shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Pulse sensor

We connected 'GSR', 'EMG', 'BVP' and 'body temperature sensor' to the board. We wrote a piece of code which reads the values from the aforementioned sensors and writes it to a network port.

**B. Application for reading sensors from eHealth platform**

We wrote an application in Java which reads the sensed data from a network port and stores it to a text file with a timestamp in the following structure for post analysis.

Time\_stamp|emg, bvp, gsr, temperature

**C. IAPS and its application (Application for Stimulus)**

We got access to IAPS [32] images and these images are already used by several researchers for emotional computing [33,34,35,36,37,38,39]. We implemented an application in C#.net that shows participants' IAPS images in a sequence in order to change participants' emotional states and also states the starting and ending time for each IAPS image during experiments. After showing participants five different images from each group, our application used to ask participants about their current emotional state by using the Likert scale (Figure 4 (b)) approach. We chose 100 IAPS images from different categories and presented them in the order shown in Figure 4(a).

Sad (5 images) Questionnaire Dislike (5 images)  
 Questionnaire Joy (5 images) Questionnaire Stress (5  
 images) Questionnaire

Dislike (5 images) Questionnaire Joy (5 images)  
 Questionnaire Stress (5 images) Questionnaire Sad (5  
 images) Questionnaire

Joy (5 images) Questionnaire Stress (5 images)  
 Questionnaire Sad (5 images) Questionnaire Dislike (5  
 images) Questionnaire

Stress (5 images) Questionnaire Sad (5 images)  
 Questionnaire Dislike (5 images) Questionnaire Joy (5  
 images) Questionnaire

Stress (5 images) Questionnaire Joy (5 images)  
 Questionnaire Dislike (5 images) Questionnaire Sad (5  
 images) Questionnaire

Figure 4(a). Chosen IAPS images

The images were shown as a slide show with a timer of 5 seconds for each image. For the questionnaire we used radio buttons and participants had to choose one emotional state. It also stores the participants' personal information i.e. age, gender, height and weight.

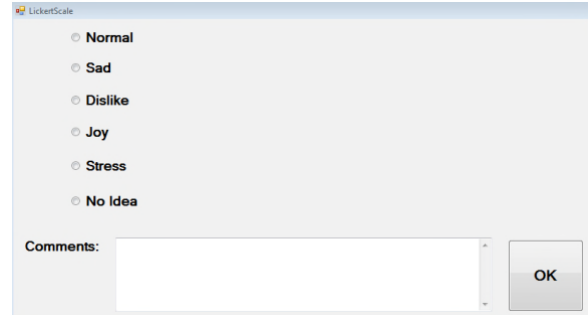


Figure 4(b). Questionnaire form

**D. Experiment setup**

Experiments were conducted in a calm room with normal temperature; there was no noise or distraction. To make sure the readings from GSR were accurate we asked the participants to dry their hands with a dryer before beginning with the experiment. Since GSR measures sweat glands as well, moist hands would result in an erroneous result. To ensure full concentration from the participants, the light in the room was kept very low and we also asked them to turn off their mobile phones during experiments. Participants were asked to wear sensors on their left arms, palms and fingers (Figure 5). They were also required to perform the experiments twice; the first experiment was useful in getting the participants to familiarize themselves with the setup, while the second attempt was actually used for analyzing their data.



Figure 5. Participant is wearing sensors

We recruited 26 participants (21 males, 5 females) for our experiment setup; two of them could not complete the experiments so we ended up with 24 participants (19 males, 5 females). The range of participants' age was from 20 to 44 (mean 26.17, SD 5.14) and ranged in BMI (body mass index) from 18.7 to 26.6 (mean 21.44, SD 2.17). Participants were required to do it twice in different days.

**E. First experiment**

As described earlier, the intention behind the first experiment was only familiarization with the setup. This was done to accommodate all first time participants, as they were somewhat nervous due to physiological devices and long cables and this could adversely influence our data. For this reason, the results from the first experiment were never used for analysis.

## F. Second experiment

In the second experiment, all participants already knew about the setup and they were not hesitating with the sensors, they performed the task with confidence and their data was stored for later analysis. We used same settings for both experiments but IAPS images were different. We showed participants different images (IAPS) for changing their emotions to sad, dislike, joy and stress. After showing a set of images; our application used to show them the questionnaire forms for their emotional states. Physiological data was logged to a laptop with a time stamp and on the other hand image application was also logging the participants' feedback to the same laptop with timestamp. After that we merged both files to generate a single file for post analysis.

## V. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Our experimental setup was able to change participants' emotional states; only four of the participants chose all of the given emotional states. This was due to the fact that it was hard for the participants to distinguish between sad, dislike and stress. Also being asked to distinguish between joy and normal during experiments was not a straightforward task. That also explains why some emotional states were ignored by participants. *“As everyone knows, emotions seem to be interrelated in various but systematic ways: Excitement and depression seem to be opposites; excitement and surprise seem to be more similar to one another; and excitement and joy seem to be highly similar, often indistinguishable”* [42]. Therefore, we generated another dataset from our experimental data; we categorized emotional states into two collections:

- Positive {Joy, Normal}
- Negative {Sad, Dislike, Stress}; ‘No-Idea’ is excluded

Now, we have the following types of datasets:

- Type1: It contains {Normal, Sad, Dislike, Joy, Stress and No-Idea}
- Type2: It contains {Positive and Negative}

Due to the fact that it was a huge dataset, it was not possible for WEKA [43] application to process the data of all 24 participants together. Therefore, we divided our datasets into six groups, each group consisting the data of four participants (as shown in Table 2); we grouped the four participants who chose all emotional states together and put them in Group-1, others were assigned to remaining groups in alphabetic order.

TABLE I. GROUPS

Groups	Age	Gender	Chosen Emotional states
Group 1	25, 24, 25, 26	3 Males, 1 Female	Normal(4), Sad(4), Dislike(4), Joy(4), Stress(4) and No-Idea(4)
Group 2	24,25,25, 38	4 Males	Normal(0), Sad(3), Dislike(4), Joy(4), Stress(4) and No-Idea(2)
Group 3	24,24,25, 44	3 Males, 1 Female	Normal(3), Sad(3), Dislike(4), Joy(4), Stress(4) and No-Idea(1)
Group 4	20,25,25, 33	2 Males, 2 Females	Normal(2), Sad(4), Dislike(4), Joy(4), Stress(2) and No-Idea(1)
Group 5	22,24,24, 25	3 Males, 1 Female	Normal(3), Sad(3), Dislike(4), Joy(4), Stress(3) and No-Idea(2)
Group 6	24,25,25, 27	4 Males	Normal(2), Sad(4), Dislike(4), Joy(4), Stress(3) and No-Idea(0)

We received values from sensors i.e. EMG, BVP, GSR and Temperature where the sample rate was around 650Hz. We analyzed both types (i.e. Type 1 and Type 2) in the following three different ways:

### A. Individuals

We applied J48 classifier [43] on the dataset of each participant.

### B. Group-wise

We divided the participants in 6 groups (as shown in Table 2) and applied J48 classifier on the dataset of each group.

### C. Portioned data

As mentioned earlier due to the limitations of processing huge datasets in WEKA toolkit, we chose small portions of data randomly pertaining to each emotion from each participant in Figure 6(a) and Figure 6(b) below.

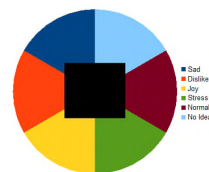


Figure 6(a). Type 1

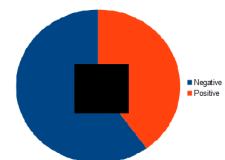


Figure 6(b). Type 2

### D. Analysis structure

We got two types of data i.e. “Two-Class” and “Six-class”; each type was analyzed on “Individual”, “Group” and “Portioned” basis. We applied J48 classifier with 10-fold cross validation.



E. Two-Class

1) *Individuals*: The outcome from the J48 classifier represents the average data of 24 participants where it correctly classified the instances with the accuracy of 99.4%; Min: 97.72%; Max: 99.67% and SD: 0.45.

```
a b <-- classified as
2169370 24518 | a = Positive
18038 4896951 | b = Negative
```

We took the confusion matrices from all participants and summed them all. Our results show the summation of all confusion matrices and accuracy of each emotional state where 'Positive' and 'Negative' emotional states were predicted with the accuracy of 98.88% and 99.63% by J48 classifier respectively.

2) *Group wise*: We took an average of correctly classified instances from all groups in order to figure out the variation amongst them. Our result shows that there is not a high variation among the groups and the average result was 99.3%; Min: 99.06%; Max: 99.45%; SD: 0.14.

```
a b <-- classified as
2181321 29401 | a = Positive
19447 4 804414 | b = Negative
```

We took confusion matrices from each group and summed them up. Our results show the summation of all confusion matrices from the groups and accuracies of emotional states where positive and Negative emotional states were predicted with the accuracy of 98.67% and 95.6% by J48 classifier respectively.

3) *Portioned data*: Our results show that J48 was able to correctly classify the instances with the accuracy of 99.33% and it was also able to predict positive and Negative emotional states with the accuracy of 98.56% and 99.67% respectively.

```
a b <-- classified as
409236 5982 | a = Positive
3095 934177 | b = Negative
```

We compared the accuracy between the categories i.e. 'Individual', 'Group' and 'Portioned' as shown in Figure 7 which shows that there is not much difference in results among them.

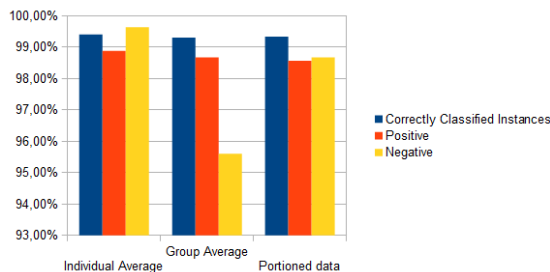


Figure 7. Comparison

F. Six-Class

1) *Individuals*: The outcome from the J48 classifier represents the average data of 24 participants where it correctly classified the instances with the accuracy of 99.13%; Min: 98.39%; Max: 99.52% and SD: 0.25.

```
a b c d e f <-- classified as
1298734 7019 3629 2091 962 571 | a = Sad
6760 2152047 5540 3829 2211 931 | b = Dislike
4074 5775 1455566 3288 1008 524 | c = Joy
2139 3890 2896 1329053 1092 467 | d = Stress
915 2267 974 1120 734834 377 | e = Normal
885 1214 602 502 450 341361 | f = NoIdea
```

We took confusion matrices from all participants and summed them up. Our results show the summation of all confusion matrices and accuracy of each emotional state where 'Sad', 'Dislike', 'Joy', 'Stress', 'Normal' and 'No-Idea' emotional states were predicted with the accuracy of 98.99%, 99.11%, 99%, 99.22%, 99.24% and 98.94% by J48 classifier respectively.

2) *Group wise*: We took an average of correctly classified instances from all groups in order to figure out the variation amongst them. Our result shows that there is not a high variation among the groups and the average result was 98.67%; Min: 98.29%; Max: 99.04%; SD: 0.26.

```
a b c d e f <-- classified as
1293196 9506 4521 3550 1500 733 | a = Sad
8791 2144771 7418 5817 3248 1273 | b = Dislike
5020 8403 1449781 4449 1733 849 | c = Joy
3484 6295 4432 1323013 1747 566 | d = Stress
1619 3706 1749 1924 730989 500 | e = Normal
1039 1708 897 684 609 340077 | f = NoIdea
```

We took confusion matrices from each group and summed them up. Our results show the summation of all confusion matrices from the groups and accuracies of emotional states where 'Sad', 'Dislike', 'Joy', 'Stress', 'Normal' and 'No-Idea' emotional states were predicted with the accuracy of 98.49%, 98.78%, 98.61%, 98.76%, 98.72% and 98.57% by J48 classifier respectively.

3) *Portioned data*: Our results show that J48 was able to correctly classify the instances with the accuracy of 98.47% and it was also able to predict 'Sad', 'Dislike', 'Joy', 'Stress', 'Normal' and 'No-Idea' emotional states with the accuracy of 98.24%, 98.75%, 98.41%, 98.34%, 98.62% and 97.99% respectively.

```
a b c d e f <-- classified as
244303 2123 1016 800 278 168 | a = Sad
1571 428263 1594 1481 507 288 | b = Dislike
983 1977 275773 1020 303 162 | c = Joy
913 1762 1142 250641 252 170 | d = Stress
328 706 413 307 133139 107 | e = Normal
210 509 241 199 130 62872 | f = NoIdea
```

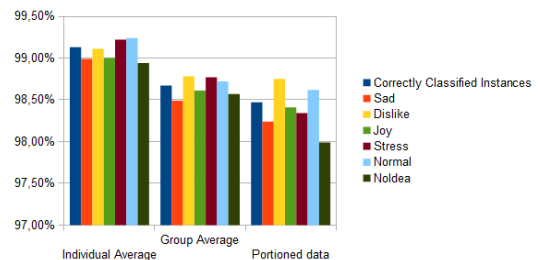


Figure 8. Comparison

We also compared the accuracy between the categories i.e. 'Individual', 'Group' and 'Portioned' as shown in Figure 8 which shows that there is not much difference in results among them.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK

We used the following approaches for analyzing the data

1. We took data of each participant and applied J48 classifier and then took an average of 'Individual' data.
2. We took integrated data from six participants, applied J48 classifier and then took an average of 'Group' data.
3. We took a small portion of data randomly from each participant and applied J48 classifier on the data

We categorized data into the following collections:

- Six emotional states i.e. 'Sad', 'Dislike', 'Joy', 'Stress', 'Normal' and 'No-Idea'.
- Two emotional states i.e. 'Positive' and 'Negative'.

Our system was able to recognize the aforementioned emotional states by using physiological devices and J48 (decision tree) classifier with high accuracy. Results have shown that few physiological devices are enough for recognizing required emotional states ('Sad', 'Dislike', 'Joy', 'Stress', 'Normal', 'No-Idea', 'Positive' and 'Negative'). This prototype is only a "proof of concept" and our results show that our approach can identify the above mentioned emotional states independent of BMI (body mass index) and age group. The physiological sensor has to be fixed properly on the participants' skin in order to predict their emotional states successfully. We will conduct more user studies where we will use physiological data and facial expressions for recognizing these emotional states.

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