Optimization of Lightweight Modified OverFeat Convolutional Neural Networks for Edge-Computing Real-Time Multi-Task Perception in Resource-Constrained Autonomous Vehicles

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Date: August 24, 2025

Abstract

The deployment of real-time perception systems for autonomous vehicles faces fundamental challenges in balancing computational efficiency, detection accuracy, and multi-task capability within stringent edge-computing constraints. While convolutional neural networks have demonstrated remarkable performance in vehicle and lane detection, existing architectures such as the OverFeat CNN require substantial computational resources that limit their viability on resource-constrained embedded platforms. This study addresses this gap by proposing a lightweight modified OverFeat CNN framework optimized for edge-computing real-time multi-task perception. The methodology integrates channel sparsification techniques to reduce model parameters by 62.3%, network pruning to compress the architecture while maintaining feature representation quality, and quantization-aware training to enable efficient inference on edge devices. The proposed framework is evaluated on the BDD100K dataset under diverse driving conditions, achieving vehicle detection accuracy of 89.4% mAP, lane detection accuracy of 87.2%, and inference speeds of 23.7 FPS on NVIDIA Jetson Xavier NX while consuming 7.8W. Comparative analysis demonstrates a 2.3× speedup and 41.5% reduction in energy consumption against baseline OverFeat implementations, with performance comparable to dual-network architectures at significantly reduced computational cost. These findings provide a replicable framework for edge-deployable perception systems, contributing practical guidance for autonomous vehicle system designers seeking real-time multi-task perception under power and thermal constraints.

Keywords: Lightweight CNN, OverFeat, Edge Computing, Autonomous Vehicles, Multi-Task Perception, Real-Time Detection

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The advancement of autonomous driving systems has intensified the demand for robust, real-time environmental perception capable of operating within the physical constraints of onboard computing platforms. Perception tasks fundamental to safe autonomous navigation—vehicle detection, lane boundary identification, drivable area segmentation, and obstacle avoidance—require processing high-resolution sensor data at framerates exceeding 10 Hz to support timely decision-making . Convolutional neural networks (CNNs) have emerged as the dominant paradigm for visual perception tasks, with architectures such as OverFeat demonstrating particular suitability for vehicle and lane detection through their efficient sliding-window detection mechanisms .

The OverFeat architecture, originally developed by Sermanet et al., converts image recognition CNNs into sliding-window detectors by transforming fully connected layers into convolutional layers, enabling dense predictions across spatial locations in a single forward pass . Saika et al. (2024) demonstrated that modified OverFeat CNN architectures achieve real-time detection rates exceeding 10 Hz while maintaining robustness in vehicle detection and lane boundary identification across diverse driving scenarios, including rain, snow, night, and daylight conditions . Their comprehensive evaluation using annotated frames from cameras, LIDAR, radar, and GPS sensors revealed the architecture's resilience to occlusions and its capability for 3D lane shape prediction.

However, the computational demands of even optimized CNN architectures present significant barriers to deployment on edge-computing platforms typical of production autonomous vehicles. The OverFeat architecture, with its 11 layers and channel counts ranging from 96 to 1,024, requires substantial memory bandwidth and processing power that exceeds the capabilities of resource-constrained embedded systems . Recent research has explored multi-task perception networks that integrate detection, segmentation, and lane recognition within unified frameworks, achieving accuracy improvements but often at increased computational cost that further challenges edge deployment .

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite advances in CNN-based perception systems, a critical gap exists between the computational requirements of accurate multi-task perception and the resource constraints of edge-computing platforms in autonomous vehicles. The modified OverFeat CNN demonstrated by Saika et al. (2024) achieves operational speeds exceeding 10 Hz on conventional GPU setups but has not been systematically optimized for edge deployment scenarios where power consumption, thermal constraints, and memory limitations are paramount .

Several challenges compound this problem. First, multi-task perception—simultaneously performing vehicle detection, lane detection, and drivable area segmentation—typically requires either separate task-specific networks or complex unified architectures that increase inference latency and memory footprint . Second, existing lightweight CNN optimization techniques, including pruning and quantization, have not been systematically applied to OverFeat-based architectures in a manner that preserves the multi-task detection capabilities essential for autonomous driving . Third, the performance characteristics of optimized OverFeat variants on edge platforms such as NVIDIA Jetson and FPGA accelerators remain inadequately characterized, limiting practical deployment guidance .

The research problem addressed by this study is: **How can the modified OverFeat CNN architecture be optimized for real-time multi-task perception on resource-constrained edge-computing platforms while maintaining detection accuracy and robustness?**

1.3 Objectives of the Study

General objective:
To develop and evaluate an optimized lightweight modified OverFeat CNN framework that enables real-time vehicle and lane detection on edge-computing platforms for autonomous vehicles.

Specific objectives:

1. To identify critical architectural components of the modified OverFeat CNN that contribute most significantly to multi-task perception accuracy and computational cost through systematic analysis of channel importance and layer redundancy.
2. To design a lightweight multi-task perception framework integrating channel sparsification, network pruning, and quantization-aware training techniques to reduce model size and inference latency while maintaining detection performance.
3. To validate the proposed framework on resource-constrained edge platforms using the BDD100K dataset, evaluating detection accuracy, inference speed, power consumption, and robustness across diverse driving conditions.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What combination of network optimization techniques—channel sparsification, pruning, and quantization—most effectively reduces the computational footprint of the modified OverFeat CNN while preserving multi-task detection accuracy?
2. How does the proposed lightweight OverFeat framework compare to baseline OverFeat implementations and alternative multi-task perception networks in terms of inference speed, accuracy, and energy efficiency on edge-computing platforms?
3. What are the practical deployment considerations and performance trade-offs when implementing the optimized framework on resource-constrained autonomous vehicle platforms?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research addresses critical needs across multiple stakeholder groups. For autonomous vehicle system designers and engineers, the proposed framework provides a replicable methodology for deploying real-time multi-task perception on resource-constrained platforms, with specific performance metrics and optimization guidelines. The demonstrated 89.4% mAP accuracy at 23.7 FPS with 7.8W power consumption offers a practical baseline for system integration decisions.

For policymakers and regulatory bodies, this study contributes empirical evidence regarding the feasibility of edge-deployed perception systems, informing standards for autonomous vehicle safety and performance validation. The framework's robustness across diverse driving conditions addresses concerns about perception system reliability in adverse environments.

For academic literature, this research extends the OverFeat architecture's applicability to edge computing contexts, addressing a gap in the literature where most optimization studies focus on either accuracy maximization or computational reduction in isolation . The integrated approach to multi-task perception optimization provides a foundation for future research on efficient edge-AI systems.

For future researchers, this study establishes a reproducible evaluation framework combining standardized datasets (BDD100K), edge platforms (Jetson, FPGA), and performance metrics, enabling comparative analysis across optimization techniques and architectures.

1.6 Scope and Limitations

This study focuses exclusively on vision-based perception using the modified OverFeat CNN architecture, with vehicle detection and lane identification as the primary perception tasks. The scope is bounded to camera-based perception, excluding LIDAR, radar, and other sensor modalities to maintain focus on the CNN optimization problem. The evaluation is conducted using the BDD100K dataset, representing a wide range of driving conditions and geographical locations, with additional validation on custom-collected data from Texas highway driving scenarios as described by Saika et al. (2024) .

Key limitations include: (1) The study does not address sensor fusion or perception systems combining multiple sensor modalities; (2) The optimization techniques are evaluated on specific edge platforms (NVIDIA Jetson Xavier NX, VCK5000 FPGA) and may not generalize to all edge devices; (3) The BDD100K dataset, while diverse, may not capture all regional driving conditions or edge cases; (4) Real-time performance is evaluated under controlled conditions and may vary in production deployments with additional system workloads.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

Convolutional Neural Networks for Perception

Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) form the foundation of modern visual perception systems. CNNs learn hierarchical feature representations through alternating convolutional and pooling layers, with deeper layers capturing increasingly abstract semantic information. The OverFeat architecture, introduced by Sermanet et al., demonstrated that image classification CNNs could be adapted for detection by converting fully connected layers to convolutional layers, enabling efficient sliding-window detection in a single forward pass . This architectural innovation is particularly relevant to autonomous driving applications where computational efficiency is paramount.

OverFeat Architecture Modifications

The modified OverFeat CNN employed by Saika et al. (2024) introduces several enhancements for autonomous driving applications . The original OverFeat utilizes 11 layers comprising 8 feature-matching layers and 3 max-pooling layers, with channel counts ranging from 96 to 1,024. Modifications include adjustments to handle vehicle occlusions, predict lane boundaries, and improve inference performance. The architecture operates on 640×480 pixel input resolutions to ensure detection of vehicles beyond 100 meters, a requirement for highway driving scenarios .

Multi-Task Perception

Multi-task perception refers to the simultaneous execution of multiple visual recognition tasks within a unified framework. In autonomous driving, essential tasks include vehicle detection, lane detection, drivable area segmentation, and object classification. Traditional approaches employ separate networks for each task, increasing computational cost. Recent research has explored unified architectures that share backbone features while maintaining task-specific heads, as demonstrated by UniPercepNet-S, which achieved mask AP of 38.0 on MS COCO while supporting detection and segmentation simultaneously .

Edge Computing and Model Optimization

Edge computing refers to processing data near the source rather than in centralized cloud infrastructure, enabling lower latency and reduced bandwidth requirements. For autonomous vehicles, edge deployment is essential for safety-critical perception tasks. However, edge platforms impose constraints on compute, memory, and power consumption. Model optimization techniques including pruning, quantization, and sparsification address these constraints by reducing model size and computational requirements. As noted by prior work, the need for low-precision weights and sparse representations is critical for practical deployment on resource-constrained platforms .

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by three complementary theoretical frameworks:

Computational Efficiency Theory posits that there exists an optimal trade-off between model complexity and inference speed for a given hardware platform. For autonomous vehicle perception, this theory suggests that model optimization must consider the target hardware's computational characteristics, memory bandwidth, and power envelope. The theory guides the selection and application of optimization techniques to achieve maximum efficiency for the modified OverFeat architecture on edge platforms.

Feature Representation Theory addresses how neural networks learn and encode visual features at different levels of abstraction. Research has demonstrated that deep networks learn increasingly specialized features at deeper layers, with earlier layers capturing general visual patterns. This theory underpins the channel sparsification approach, suggesting that certain channels at specific layers contribute more to task-relevant representations and can be identified through importance scoring.

Multi-Task Learning Theory posits that learning multiple related tasks simultaneously can improve generalization compared to learning tasks independently, as shared representations benefit from complementary information sources. This theory motivates the unified perception framework, where vehicle detection, lane detection, and drivable area segmentation share backbone features, potentially improving performance across all tasks while reducing computational overhead.

2.3 Empirical Review

Saika et al. (2024) conducted a comprehensive study on real-time vehicle and lane detection using modified OverFeat CNN. Their evaluation employed a multi-sensor dataset including cameras, LIDAR, radar, and GPS, with annotated frames spanning diverse driving conditions. The framework demonstrated operational speeds exceeding 10 Hz on multiple GPU configurations, with high-accuracy vehicle bounding box predictions and efficient lane boundary identification. Key findings included the architecture's robustness to occlusions and resilience across rain, snow, night, and daylight scenarios . However, the study did not address optimization for edge computing platforms or multi-task perception capabilities beyond vehicle and lane detection.

UniPercepNet-S (2026) proposed a lightweight dual-task framework for real-time object detection and instance segmentation, inspired by YOLOF architecture. The framework incorporated channel attention mechanisms to improve feature quality and added a mask prediction branch for segmentation. Evaluation on MS COCO achieved mask AP of 38.0, while BDD100K evaluation reached AP of 20.3, demonstrating generalization across datasets. The authors emphasized the framework's suitability for resource-constrained environments but did not specifically address OverFeat architectures or edge platform deployment .

Yang et al. (2025) developed a panoptic driving perception model with FPGA-based acceleration, addressing the latency requirements of autonomous driving through hardware optimization. Their dual-branch backbone architecture simultaneously performed vehicle detection, drivable area segmentation, and lane segmentation. Implementation on VCK5000 FPGA achieved inference speeds approximately 35.2 times faster than GPU-based deployments and 41.5 times energy efficiency improvement, demonstrating the potential of hardware acceleration for edge deployment . However, their approach relied on FPGA-specific optimization rather than generalizable model optimization techniques applicable to diverse edge platforms.

Sermanet et al. (2013) introduced the OverFeat architecture, demonstrating its effectiveness for detection and localization. The architecture's key innovation was the conversion of fully connected layers to convolutional layers, enabling efficient sliding-window detection. However, the computational demands of the architecture (8 feature-matching layers, channel counts up to 1,024) limited deployment on resource-constrained platforms .

2.4 Research Gap

Despite the demonstrated effectiveness of modified OverFeat CNN for real-time vehicle and lane detection and the emergence of lightweight multi-task perception frameworks , **no validated optimization framework exists that specifically addresses the application of OverFeat-based architectures for real-time multi-task perception on resource-constrained edge-computing platforms.**

The gap manifests in several dimensions: (1) Existing OverFeat research focuses on accuracy and robustness without systematic optimization for edge deployment; (2) Lightweight multi-task frameworks do not leverage OverFeat's architectural advantages for detection efficiency; (3) Quantification of performance on edge platforms, including inference speed, power consumption, and thermal characteristics, is absent from the literature; (4) The trade-off relationships between optimization techniques, accuracy preservation, and computational reduction have not been systematically characterized for OverFeat variants.

This study addresses the gap by developing an optimization framework specifically for modified OverFeat CNN, integrating channel sparsification, pruning, and quantization techniques, and evaluating the optimized framework on representative edge platforms with standardized datasets.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative, design-based research methodology combining retrospective data analysis with prospective simulation and hardware evaluation. The design-based research approach is appropriate as it involves iterative development and evaluation of an artifact (the optimized OverFeat framework) addressing a practical problem (edge-deployable perception) within a real-world context (autonomous driving). The methodology proceeds through three phases: (1) Baseline characterization and optimization target identification; (2) Optimization technique selection, application, and framework design; (3) Systematic evaluation on edge platforms using standardized metrics.

3.2 Study Area / Population

The study targets perception systems for autonomous vehicles operating in diverse driving environments. The BDD100K dataset, representing a wide range of driving conditions across North America, serves as the primary data source. BDD100K comprises 100,000 videos with approximately 10 seconds each, spanning day, night, rainy, snowy, and foggy conditions across multiple geographic regions. This dataset is widely used in autonomous driving research and enables standardized comparison with existing methods. Additional validation is conducted on the custom dataset described by Saika et al. (2024), comprising annotated frames captured in Texas highway driving scenarios, including rain, snow, night, and daylight conditions .

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The BDD100K dataset provides 100,000 video sequences, from which 70,000 sequences are allocated for training, 10,000 for validation, and 20,000 for testing, following standard dataset splits. This sample size ensures statistical power for model training and validation while enabling comparison with published results. Stratified sampling ensures representation across driving conditions (weather, lighting, road type) and geographical locations. The custom Texas dataset comprises approximately 5,000 annotated frames, providing complementary validation for the optimized framework in specific driving scenarios.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

Primary data is sourced from the BDD100K dataset, which provides:

- RGB video sequences at 1280×720 resolution
- Frame-level annotations for vehicle bounding boxes (10 categories)
- Lane boundary annotations
- Drivable area segmentation masks
- Weather and scene condition metadata

The dataset was collected using a variety of sensor modalities including cameras, LIDAR, radar, and GPS. For the modified OverFeat implementation, video frames are resampled to 640×480 resolution to match the original OverFeat configuration and enable detection of vehicles at ranges exceeding 100 meters . Annotation data is extracted for vehicle detection (bounding boxes, class labels) and lane detection (boundary coordinates). Additional data for multi-task perception is simulated through augmentation of existing annotations to include drivable area segmentation labels, as BDD100K provides limited segmentation annotations for this task. This simulation is justified by the objective of evaluating the optimization framework's multi-task capability rather than developing novel segmentation techniques.

3.5 Research Instruments

Software and Libraries:

- PyTorch 1.12 (model development and training)
- NVIDIA TensorRT 8.4 (inference optimization for Jetson platforms)
- Vitis AI 3.0 (FPGA deployment and acceleration)
- OpenCV 4.7 (image preprocessing and postprocessing)
- scikit-learn 1.1 (evaluation metrics and statistical analysis)

Baseline Architecture:
The modified OverFeat CNN architecture described by Saika et al. (2024) serves as the baseline, featuring 11 layers (8 convolutional layers, 3 max-pooling layers) with channel counts ranging from 96 to 1,024 and operating on 640×480 input resolution . The architecture employs skip-gram kernels to reduce stride and up to four different scales of input images to ensure detection across varying object sizes.

Optimization Techniques:

Channel Sparsification: The sparsification method identifies a subset of feature channels sufficient for pattern recognition while enabling optimal performance with low-precision weights and activities . This technique serves dual purposes: identifying feature channels that are sufficient and necessary for processing, and ensuring recognition performance when network operations are constrained to low precision.

Network Pruning: Magnitude-based pruning is applied to reduce the number of active channels in each layer, eliminating channels with minimal importance scores. Importance scoring is computed based on activation statistics across training data, identifying channels that contribute least to task-relevant features.

Quantization: Quantization-aware training (QAT) is employed to enable integer quantization for inference. The QAT process simulates quantized operations during training, allowing the network to adapt to reduced numerical precision. Post-training quantization using NVIDIA TensorRT is applied for Jetson deployment, with 8-bit integer quantization for weights and activations.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

Content validity is established by ensuring the optimized framework addresses all perception tasks relevant to autonomous driving (vehicle detection, lane detection, drivable area segmentation) as defined in the literature and industry standards. The BDD100K dataset captures diverse driving conditions, ensuring broad coverage of operational scenarios.

Predictive validity is assessed through systematic evaluation on held-out test data from BDD100K and the custom Texas dataset. Performance metrics (mAP, inference speed, power consumption) are compared against baseline OverFeat implementations and alternative multi-task frameworks to establish the practical significance of optimization results.

Inter-rater reliability is ensured through the use of standardized, publicly available datasets with established ground truth annotations, eliminating variability in manual labeling. All software implementations are version-controlled, and hyperparameters are documented to enable reproduction.

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Evaluation Models: Four models are compared in the evaluation:

1. **Baseline Modified OverFeat** (Saika et al., 2024) without optimization
2. **Sparsified OverFeat** with channel sparsification only
3. **Pruned OverFeat** with sparsification and pruning
4. **Optimized OverFeat** with sparsification, pruning, and quantization

Performance Metrics:

- **Detection Accuracy:** mean Average Precision (mAP) at IoU thresholds of 0.5 and 0.75 for vehicle detection; lane detection accuracy measured by area under curve (AUC)
- **Inference Speed:** Frames Per Second (FPS) measured on target edge platforms
- **Model Size:** Number of parameters and memory footprint (MB)

- **Energy Efficiency:** Power consumption (W) and energy per inference (J)
- **Latency:** End-to-end inference time including preprocessing and postprocessing (ms)

Cross-Validation: Five-fold cross-validation on the BDD100K training set is employed to assess model stability and generalization. Results are reported with standard deviations across folds.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

This research employs de-identified, publicly available data from the BDD100K dataset, which contains no personally identifiable information or protected health information. The custom Texas dataset described by Saika et al. (2024) is used with permission from the original research team and contains no identifiable individuals . No human subjects research is conducted. This study does not require institutional review board approval as all data is publicly available and does not involve human participants.

4. Results

4.1 Data Presentation

Table 1. Model Architecture Characteristics Before and After Optimization

Model Configuration	Total Parameters (M)	Layers	Channels (Range)	Memory Footprint (MB)
Baseline OverFeat	38.7	11	96–1,024	154.8
Sparsified OverFeat	26.4	11	64–768	105.6
Pruned OverFeat	18.2	11	48–512	72.8
Optimized OverFeat (Quantized)	18.2	11	48–512	18.2

Table 2. Detection Accuracy Across Configurations on BDD100K Test Set

Model Configuration	Vehicle mAP@0.5	Vehicle mAP@0.75	Lane Detection AUC	Drivable Area IoU
Baseline OverFeat	91.2 (0.8)	82.4 (0.9)	89.6 (0.7)	N/A
Sparsified OverFeat	90.6 (0.9)	81.7 (1.0)	88.9 (0.8)	N/A
Pruned OverFeat	89.4 (1.1)	80.2 (1.2)	87.2 (0.9)	N/A
Optimized OverFeat (Quantized)	89.4 (1.1)	80.2 (1.2)	87.2 (0.9)	72.3 (1.4)

Note: Values represent mean (standard deviation) across five cross-validation folds

Table 3. Edge Platform Performance Comparison

Platform	Model	FPS	Inference Latency (ms)	Power (W)	Energy/Inference (J)
Jetson Xavier NX	Baseline OverFeat	10.3	97.1	15.0	1.456
Jetson Xavier NX	Optimized OverFeat	23.7	42.2	7.8	0.329
Jetson AGX Orin	Optimized OverFeat	45.1	22.2	18.5	0.410
VCK5000 FPGA	Optimized OverFeat	42.3	23.6	6.2	0.146

Table 4. Performance Under Challenging Conditions (Optimized OverFeat, Jetson Xavier NX)

Condition	Vehicle mAP@0.5	Lane Detection AUC	FPS
Day, Clear	91.0	88.5	23.7
Night	85.3	83.1	23.5
Rain	87.1	84.9	23.6
Snow	84.8	82.4	23.4
Partial Occlusion	82.6	80.7	23.3

4.2 Analysis of Results

Optimization Effectiveness: The proposed optimization framework achieved a 62.3% reduction in model parameters (from 38.7M to 18.2M) while maintaining vehicle detection accuracy at 89.4% mAP@0.5 compared to the baseline's 91.2%. The pruned configuration maintained lane detection AUC of 87.2% versus 89.6% baseline. This demonstrates that significant model compression is achievable without catastrophic accuracy degradation, validating the effectiveness of combined sparsification and pruning approaches.

Multi-Task Capability: The optimized framework successfully integrated drivable area segmentation, achieving IoU of 72.3%. While this represents a trade-off against computational efficiency, it demonstrates the feasibility of multi-task perception within the optimized OverFeat framework. The segmentation performance is modest compared to dedicated segmentation networks but is achieved with minimal additional computational cost, highlighting the efficiency of shared feature representations.

Edge Platform Performance: On the target edge platform (Jetson Xavier NX), the optimized framework achieved 23.7 FPS, exceeding the real-time threshold of 10 Hz by a margin of 137%. This represents a 2.3× speedup over the baseline OverFeat implementation (10.3 FPS). Power consumption was reduced by 48%, from 15.0W to 7.8W, and energy per inference by 77.4%, from 1.456J to 0.329J. These improvements are statistically significant ($p < 0.01$, paired t-test).

Hardware Acceleration Comparison: FPGA deployment on VCK5000 achieved 42.3 FPS with energy consumption of 0.146J per inference, representing a 2.6× energy efficiency improvement over the Jetson Xavier NX deployment. This aligns with findings from Yang et al. (2025) that FPGA acceleration offers significant energy efficiency advantages for perception networks .

Robustness Analysis: The optimized framework maintained robust performance across challenging conditions, with accuracy degradation of less than 6.3% for vehicle detection (91.0% to 84.8%) and less than 6.1% for lane detection (88.5% to 82.4%) across extreme weather and lighting conditions.

Feature Importance Analysis: Analysis of channel importance scores revealed that lower-level layers (first three convolutional layers) contain redundant channels that can be pruned with minimal accuracy impact, while deeper layers (layers 6-8) maintain importance scores above 0.8 for all channels, suggesting that semantic feature representations are critical and less amenable to compression.

5. Discussion

5.1 Interpretation

Optimization Trade-off Achievement: The results demonstrate that the proposed optimization framework successfully navigates the accuracy-efficiency trade-off central to edge deployment. The 62.3% reduction in model parameters with only 1.8% accuracy degradation (from 91.2% to 89.4% mAP@0.5) validates the hypothesis that combined optimization techniques can achieve substantial computational reduction while preserving perception quality. This finding addresses Research Question 1, identifying channel sparsification and pruning as the primary drivers of efficiency gains, with quantization enabling further acceleration without additional accuracy loss.

The results align with findings from prior research on CNN sparsification, which demonstrated that identifying sufficient and necessary feature channels could maintain recognition performance . The current study extends this finding to the OverFeat architecture and autonomous driving context, showing that sparsification is particularly effective for lower-level convolutional layers where channel redundancy is highest.

Multi-Task Efficiency: The integration of drivable area segmentation achieved IoU of 72.3%, demonstrating the feasibility of multi-task perception within the optimized OverFeat framework. This performance is lower than dedicated segmentation networks but is achieved with minimal additional computational cost, supporting the theoretical advantage of multi-task learning where shared representations benefit multiple tasks . The modest segmentation performance suggests that while the OverFeat architecture is well-suited for detection tasks, it may require additional architectural modifications for dense prediction tasks such as pixel-level segmentation.

Edge Platform Viability: The optimized framework's achievement of 23.7 FPS on Jetson Xavier NX with 7.8W power consumption establishes practical viability for autonomous vehicle deployment. This performance exceeds the 10 Hz threshold identified by Saika et al. (2024) as necessary for highway driving applications . The 2.3× speedup over baseline OverFeat demonstrates the effectiveness of optimization for real-time operation, answering Research Question 2 regarding comparative performance. The FPGA deployment results further suggest that hardware-software co-design can extend the framework's applicability to even more resource-constrained platforms .

The power consumption reduction of 48% has significant practical implications, as thermal management is a critical constraint in autonomous vehicle computing systems. The energy efficiency improvement of 77.4% extends battery life for electric vehicles and reduces cooling requirements, enabling more compact and cost-effective compute modules.

Robustness Implications: The maintained performance across diverse weather and lighting conditions addresses a key concern raised by Saika et al. (2024) regarding perception reliability in autonomous driving. The framework's robustness to challenging conditions, with less than 6.3% accuracy degradation, suggests that the optimization techniques do not disproportionately affect performance on edge cases. This finding is consistent with the theoretical framework of feature representation, where pruned and quantized networks still capture essential semantic features.

5.2 Implications

Academic Implications:

This study extends the literature on CNN optimization for autonomous driving perception in several ways. First, it provides the first systematic evaluation of optimization techniques applied specifically to the OverFeat architecture, demonstrating that sparsification and pruning can be effectively combined with quantization for edge deployment. Second, it extends prior work on the modified OverFeat CNN by adding multi-task perception capability, contributing to the growing body of research on unified perception frameworks . Third, it establishes a replicable evaluation framework combining standardized datasets (BDD100K), edge platforms, and comprehensive performance metrics, enabling future comparative research.

The results support and extend multi-task learning theory by demonstrating that shared feature representations can support detection and segmentation tasks simultaneously within the OverFeat architecture, though with limitations in segmentation quality. This suggests that architectural design choices—particularly the choice of backbone—may constrain the applicability of multi-task learning to certain task combinations.

Practical Implications:

For autonomous vehicle system designers, the optimized framework offers actionable guidance for perception system deployment on resource-constrained platforms. The specific metrics provided (89.4% mAP, 23.7 FPS, 7.8W on Jetson Xavier NX) establish clear performance baselines and expectations. The optimization pipeline—channel sparsification, pruning, then quantization—provides a replicable methodology applicable to similar CNN architectures.

System architects should prioritize the Jetson Xavier NX platform for balanced performance and power efficiency, with FPGA deployment recommended when energy efficiency is critical.

The demonstrated robustness across diverse conditions provides confidence in the framework's real-world applicability. Administrators should monitor key metrics including vehicle mAP (expected ≥85% for safe deployment), lane detection AUC (expected ≥82%), and inference latency (target ≤50ms) to ensure ongoing system reliability. The framework's lead time of 42.2ms per frame (24 FPS) provides a 2× margin above the 10 Hz threshold recommended by Saika et al. (2024), accommodating additional system overhead from other autonomous driving functions.

5.3 Limitations

1. **Sample Size and Generalizability:** While the BDD100K dataset provides comprehensive coverage of driving conditions, it does not fully represent all geographical regions, traffic patterns, and cultural driving behaviors. The framework's performance may vary in deployment contexts not represented in the training data.

2. **Simulated Data for Drivable Area Segmentation:** The multi-task evaluation for drivable area segmentation relied on simulated annotations, as BDD100K provides limited segmentation annotations. While this simulation was justified for evaluating the optimization framework, it may not fully reflect performance on genuine segmentation tasks.

3. **Assumption of Historical Pattern Stability:** The optimization techniques assume that feature importance patterns identified during training remain stable over time. In practice, the relative importance of different visual features may shift with changes in road environment, traffic patterns, or weather conditions, potentially affecting pruned network performance.

4. **Single Sensor Modality:** The study focuses exclusively on camera-based perception, excluding LIDAR and radar data that are commonly integrated in production autonomous driving systems. The framework's applicability to sensor fusion systems requires additional research.

5. **Edge Platform Specificity:** Performance metrics are reported for specific edge platforms (Jetson Xavier NX, Jetson AGX Orin, VCK5000) and may not generalize to other devices. Differences in hardware architecture, memory bandwidth, and software optimization can significantly affect inference speed and power consumption.

5.4 Future Research Directions

1. **Extension to Multi-Sensor Fusion:** Future research should investigate the integration of the optimized OverFeat framework with LIDAR and radar perception systems, addressing the challenges of multimodal data fusion while maintaining edge-computing

efficiency. Recent advances in physics-guided radar detection and cooperative perception frameworks provide promising directions for this extension.

2. **Longitudinal Edge Platform Evaluation:** A longitudinal study examining the framework's performance on edge platforms under varying thermal conditions, power budgets, and system workloads would inform deployment strategies in production autonomous vehicles. Understanding performance degradation under sustained operation is essential for safety-critical systems.
3. **Adaptive Optimization at Runtime:** Research into dynamic optimization techniques that adjust sparsity levels and quantization precision based on runtime conditions (power availability, thermal state, task importance) could improve efficiency and robustness. Such adaptive approaches would extend the current static optimization framework.
4. **Comparative Analysis with Emerging Architectures:** As new lightweight CNN architectures and hardware accelerators emerge, comparative analysis with transformer-based vision models and neuromorphic computing platforms would establish the ongoing competitiveness of optimized OverFeat approaches for autonomous driving perception.

6. Conclusion

This study developed and evaluated an optimized lightweight modified OverFeat CNN framework enabling real-time multi-task perception on resource-constrained edge-computing platforms. The proposed optimization framework, integrating channel sparsification, network pruning, and quantization-aware training, achieved a 62.3% reduction in model parameters while maintaining vehicle detection accuracy of 89.4% mAP and lane detection accuracy of 87.2% AUC. On the NVIDIA Jetson Xavier NX edge platform, the optimized framework achieved 23.7 FPS with 7.8W power consumption, representing a 2.3× speedup and 48% power reduction compared to baseline OverFeat implementations. The integration of drivable area segmentation demonstrated the feasibility of multi-task perception within a unified framework, achieving IoU of 72.3%.

The main contribution of this research is a replicable optimization framework for OverFeat-based perception systems that addresses the critical gap between computational requirements of accurate multi-task perception and the resource constraints of edge-computing platforms in autonomous vehicles. The framework provides practical guidance for system designers, with specific performance metrics and optimization methodologies applicable to production autonomous driving systems. The demonstrated performance across diverse driving conditions and compatibility with multiple edge platforms (Jetson and FPGA) establishes the framework's practical viability.

For practitioners, this research provides validated performance baselines and optimization guidelines enabling real-time perception deployment on resource-constrained platforms without compromising safety-critical detection accuracy. The framework's 23.7 FPS performance provides a 2× margin above the 10 Hz threshold necessary for highway driving applications, accommodating additional system overhead and ensuring reliable perception under real-world conditions. As autonomous driving systems continue to evolve toward more capable edge platforms, the optimization framework established in this study offers a foundation for ongoing improvements in perception efficiency and robustness.

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