



**AMRITA SCHOOL OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

**23AIE232M PYTHON FOR AI  
END SEMESTER REVIEW REPORT**

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**Marks**

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**BONAFIDE CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the project entitled “Big Mart Sales Prediction” submitted by

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for the award of the **Degree of Minor** in “**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND MACHINE LEARNING(23AIE232M)**” is a bonafide record of the work carried out by them under my guidance and supervision at Amrita School of Artificial Intelligence, Coimbatore.

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Submitted for the university examination held on 24-04-2025

**INTERNAL EXAM**

**EXTERNAL EXAMINER**

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**DECLARATION**

**We**, Bavya S (CB.EN.U4CCE23006), Deepana S (CB.EN.U4EEE23109), Kadiri Sree Charitha (CB.EN.U4ECE23224) , Sai Dharsana I (CB.EN.U4ECE23040) hereby declare that this project entitled **“Bigmart Sales Prediction”**, is the record of the original work done under the guidance of Chandni M, Assistant professor, Amrita School of AI, Coimbatore. To the best of my knowledge this work has not formed the basis for the award of any degree/diploma/ associateship/fellowship/or a similar award to any candidate in any University.

**Place: Amrita School of AI, Coimbatore**

**Signature of the Students**

**Date: 24-04-2025**

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**Dr. K.P.Soman**

**Professor and Head**

**Center for Computational Engineering and Networking**

# Contents

<b>Acknowledgement.....</b>	<b>6</b>
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## **List of Figures**

1.1 Correlation map.....	16
1.2 Feature Importance Graph.....	17
1.3 Distribution Graphs for numerical features.....	18
1.4 Countplot for Categorical features.....	18
1.5 R – Squared Score Graph.....	21
1.6 RMSE graph.....	21
1.7 Django input features entering template.....	23
1.8 CRUD operations graph.....	24
1.9 Django Admin panel.....	24

<b>List of Abbreviations.....</b>	<b>7</b>
-----------------------------------	----------

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>8</b>
----------------------	----------

## **1 . Introduction**

1.1 Problem Statement .....	9
1.2 Objectives.....	9
1.3 Literature Survey.....	9

## **2. Background**

2.1 Introduction to Big Mart Sales Prediction.....	11
2.2 Sales Trends and Seasonal Impact.....	11

<b>2.3 Challenges in Predicting Sales Across Stores.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.4 Dataset Description.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>3.Proposed Work</b>	
<b>3.1 Workflow.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>3.2 Technologies and Libraries Used.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>3.3 EDA .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3.4 Data Preprocessing.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>3.5 Model Building.....</b>	<b>19</b>
Table 1.1 Model Performance Metrics.....	22
<b>4.Implementation and Results.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>5.Conclusion.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>6.References.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>7.List of Publications based on this research work.....</b>	<b>26</b>

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## **List of Abbreviations**

EDA – Exploratory Data Analysis

SQL – Structured Query language

DB - Data Base

CSV – Comma Seperated Values

RMSE – Root Mean Squared Error

MAE - Mean Absolute Error

MSE - Mean Squared Error

## **Abstract:**

This project focuses on predicting product sales for Big Mart, a major retail chain, using machine learning techniques. Leveraging a dataset containing historical sales data and product-outlet features, the team explored various regression models to identify the most accurate predictor. Extensive data preprocessing was conducted, including handling missing values, encoding categorical features, and normalization. A comparative analysis of models such as Linear Regression, Decision Trees, Random Forest, Gradient Boosting, SVR, Lasso, and MLP Regressor revealed that XGBoost delivered superior performance with the highest  $R^2$  score and the lowest error metrics. The final model was deployed using the Django web framework, integrating real-time sales prediction through a user-friendly interface and backed by an SQLite database. Web scraping functionality was also introduced to enable future expansion into real time data acquisition. This end-to-end solution exemplifies how machine learning and full-stack development can be synergized to address practical business problems in retail analytics.



# 1.Introduction

## 1.1.Problem Statement

Big Mart is a retail chain operating multiple stores across different cities. The company has gathered historical data on product sales along with information related to the products and their respective outlets.

The task is to develop a **machine learning model** that can **predict the sales of a particular product** based on available features such as item type, item price, store size, store location, and other product/outlet characteristics.

## 1.2. Objectives

- Understand the factors influencing product sales
- Clean and preprocess real-world retail data
- Train and evaluate multiple regression models (Linear Regression, Random Forest, XGBOOST, Lasso, Decision Tree etc.)
- Select the best-performing model to make final prediction
- Integrated the model into a Django web app with SQL DB along with web scrapping

## 1.3. Literature Review

### PAPER1 [1]

**Title:** Big Mart Sales Prediction Using Machine Learning

#### **Methodology**

- Data cleaning, handling missing values, and feature encoding
- Tried multiple models: Linear, Polynomial, Ridge, XGBoost
- XGBoost performed best (based on RMSE, MAE, MSE)
- Integrated the model into a Django web app with SQL DB for real-time predictions

#### **Highlights**

- XGBoost achieved the **best performance** among all models
- Feature analysis provided insights into customer preferences and outlet impact
- Supports enhanced **inventory management** and **business decision-making**
- Suggests potential for integration with advanced techniques like ARIMA
- Real-time system design enables quick adaptation to changing sales trends

#### **Limitations**

- Limited focus on real-time deployment or application
- No web interface or database integration mentioned

## **PAPER2 [2]**

**Title:** Machine Learning Insights into Retail Sales Prediction: A Comparative Analysis of Algorithms

### **Methodology**

- Applied Z-score for outlier removal and imputation for missing values
- Trained models: Linear Regression, Random Forest, XGBoost
- Visualized correlations and feature impacts
- Evaluated using  $R^2$ , MAE, and RMSE

### **Highlights**

- **Random Forest Regression** showed the best performance:
  - $R^2$ : 0.545
  - MAE: 781.64
  - RMSE: 1106.81
- **XGBoost** performed second-best:
  - $R^2$ : 0.508
  - MAE: 821.80
  - RMSE: 1157.61
- **Linear Regression** had the weakest performance:
  - $R^2$ : 0.504
  - MAE: 880.99
  - RMSE: 1162.44
- Emphasis on visual storytelling using heatmaps and bar plots to identify key features
- XGBoost and Random Forest considered superior for non-linear relationship

### **Limitations**

- Limits generalization
- No use of cross validation
- No time series modelling

## **PAPER3 [3]**

**Title:** Grid Search Optimization (GSO) Based Future Sales Prediction for Big Mart

### **Methodology:**

- Enhanced XGBoost using Grid Search for hyperparameter tuning
- Created derived features like Item\_Type\_New, Outlet Age
- Focused on reducing log loss, RMSE, MAE
- Used 10-fold cross-validation for validation

### **Highlights**

- **Ensemble XGBoost + Grid Search** achieved better results than default XGBoost
- Feature importance:
  - Item MRP is the most informative feature

- Performance Comparison:

<b>Metric</b>	<b>XGBoost (Before Tuning)</b>	<b>XGBoost (After Tuning)</b>
RMSE (Train)	1066	1052
MAE (Train)	749.78	739.03
RMSE (Test)	180.2	178.7
MAE (Test)	134.08	129.90

- Best estimator performance at 300 estimators and learning rate 0.1

### **Limitations**

- Limits generalization
- No use of cross validation
- No time series modelling

## **2.Background**

### **2.1 Introduction to BigMart Sales Prediction**

- Predicting future sales helps optimize inventory and marketing strategies.
- Focuses on analyzing historical sales data from multiple stores and products.
- Enables data-driven decisions for better business outcomes.
- Uses machine learning models to forecast sales accurately.

### **2.2 Sales Trends and Seasonal Impact**

- Sales show clear patterns across months, festivals, and holidays.
- Certain product categories perform better during specific seasons (e.g., summer drinks in hot months).
- Store location and type also affect sales patterns.
- Promotions and discounts lead to temporary spikes in sales.

### **2.3 Challenges in Predicting Sales Across Stores**

- Large variability in product availability and visibility across stores.
- Inconsistent promotional strategies across regions.
- Missing or inconsistent data for some items or outlets.
- External factors like weather or regional events are hard to quantify.
- Model needs to generalize across different store formats and customer behaviour.

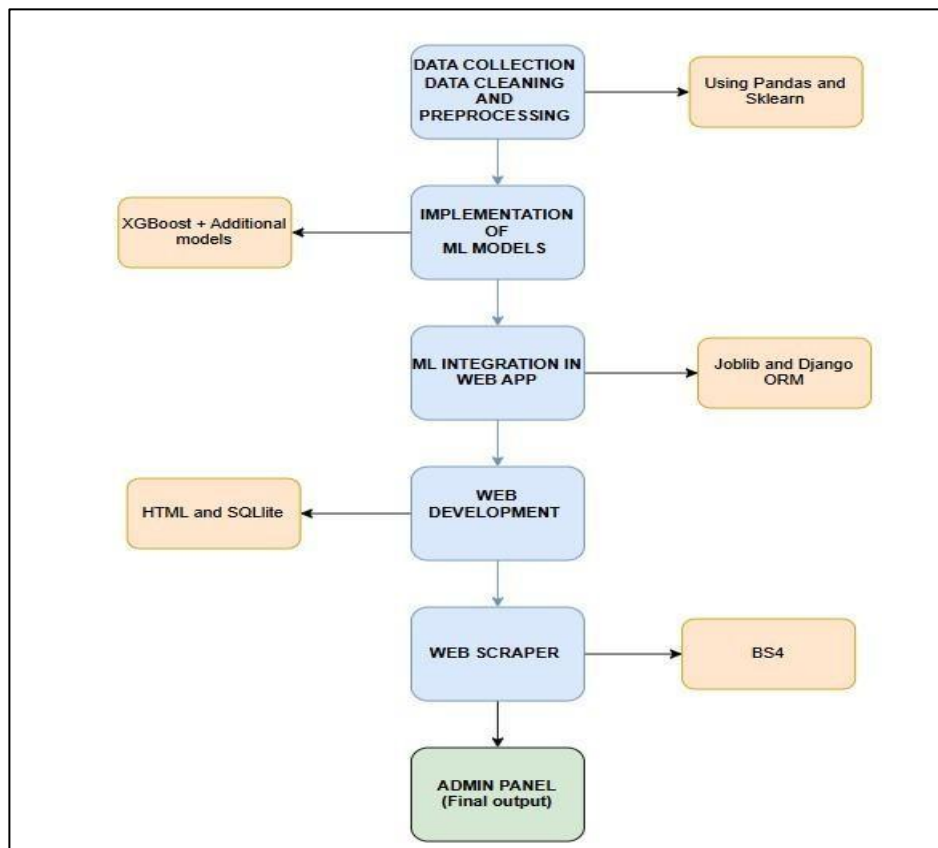
### **2.4 Dataset Description**

- Item\_Identifier: Unique ID for each product.
- Item\_Weight: Weight of the product.
- Item\_Fat\_Content: Type of fat content (Low Fat, Regular, etc.).
- Item\_Visibility: Percentage of shelf space allocated to the product.

- Item\_Type: Category of the product (Dairy, Snacks, etc.).
- Outlet\_Identifier: Unique ID for each store.
- Outlet\_Establishment\_Year: Year the store was established.
- Outlet\_Size: Size of the store (Small, Medium, High).
- Outlet\_Location\_Type: Tier of the city (Tier 1, Tier 2, etc.).
- Outlet\_Type: Type of store (Grocery, Supermarket Type1, etc.).
- Item\_Outlet\_Sales: Target variable representing sales.

### 3.Proposed Work

#### 3.1 : WORKFLOW :



## 3.2 : Technologies & Libraries Used

### **NumPy:**

Used for numerical computations.

Efficient handling of arrays and mathematical operations.

### **Pandas:**

Utilized for loading, cleaning, and manipulating data.

Converts raw data into structured, tabular formats suitable for analysis.

### **Matplotlib and Seaborn:**

Used for data visualization.

Generates histograms, boxplots, scatterplots, and heatmaps to understand data distributions and relationships between features.

### **Scikit-learn:**

Main library for machine learning model development and evaluation.

Handles:

Data preprocessing (label encoding, scaling, train-test splitting)

Implementation of regression models: Linear, Ridge, Polynomial

Metrics used MSE, RMSE, R2

### **XGBoost:**

Specialized library for gradient boosting algorithms.

Used to train the final model that gave the best prediction performance.

### **Django (Web Framework):**

Facilitates web application development using Python.

Handles backend logic, form handling, and routing of user inputs and prediction outputs.

### **HTML:**

Used to create and structure the frontend user interface.

Displays input forms and results in a user-friendly format.

### **SQL Integration:**

Supports CRUD operations (Create, Read, Update, Delete).

Stores user inputs and predicted outputs in a database, improving interactivity and usability.

### **Web Scraping:**

Implemented in the current version.

Project is structured in a way that allows for future integration of real-time data collection via web scraping.

### 3.3 : EDA

#### Categorical Features

1. Item\_Fat\_Content
  - There's some inconsistency in labels (Low Fat, Regular)
  - Low Fat items dominate the dataset, indicating preference or stock pattern.
2. Item\_Type
  - A wide variety of item categories (like dairy, snacks, meat, etc.).
  - Helps in grouping for sales trends.
3. Outlet\_Size
  - Many outlets have missing or unspecified sizes (nan or blank).
  - Medium-sized outlets are the most common among the specified ones.
4. Outlet\_Location\_Type
  - Three types of locations: Tier 1, 2, and 3.
  - Tier 3 outlets appear to be the most frequent.
5. Outlet\_Type
  - Types include: Grocery Store, Supermarket Type1/2/3.
  - Supermarket Type1 is the most common, while Type3 is rare.
6. Item\_Identifier:
  - A unique code for each item.
  - Can be used to extract item category based on the prefix (FD, DR, NC).
7. Outlet\_Identifier:
  - A unique code for each outlet.
  - Can be used directly or the numeric suffix can be extracted to create a more general outlet identifier.

#### Numerical Features

1. Item\_Weight
  - Normally distributed with some outliers.
  - Need imputation for missing values.
2. Item\_Visibility
  - Right-skewed distribution.
  - Many values are near zero—possibly invalid entries.
3. Item\_MRP
  - Bimodal or multimodal distribution—may represent different pricing segments.
  - Useful for sales prediction.
4. Item\_Outlet\_Sales
  - Heavily right-skewed—most items have low sales, a few with very high sales.
  - Could benefit from log transformation in modeling.

### Correlation Heatmap of numerical features:

- **Item\_MRP** has strongest positive correlation of **+0.57** with sales, suggests that products with higher MRP tend to have higher sales—likely due to perceived value or brand influence..
- **Item\_Visibility** has the weak negative correlation of **-0.13** with sales. Could indicate visibility outliers or that items with higher visibility don't necessarily sell more. May need cleaning or transformation. Item\_Visibility need outlier treatment
- **Outlet\_Establishment\_Year** has a Very weak negative correlation of **-0.05** with sales. Older outlets might be slightly less performant, but not significant. Could be more useful in encoded or bucketed form
- **Item\_Weight** with practically **no correlation** with sales. Unlikely to impact sales directly.

### Boxplot: Sales by Item Type

- All item types have a wide range of sales, **with similar medians**, but some have more outliers on the higher side — especially Fruits and Vegetables, Dairy, Snack Foods, Household, etc.
- Seafood appears to have **slightly higher median** sales among all — possibly a premium category.
- Health and Hygiene and Frozen Foods also show healthy sales, suggesting consumer interest.

### Boxplot: Sales by Outlet Type

- **Supermarket Type 3** has the **highest median and maximum sales**, making it the most profitable outlet type.
- **Grocery Store** has the **lowest median and range**, indicating a relatively underperforming channel. • **Supermarket Type 1 and 2** perform moderately but still better than Grocery Stores.

## 3.4 : Data Preprocessing

Shape: (8523, 12) (rows, columns) **Missing**

### Values:

- **Item\_Weight**: 1463 missing values filled with **median**.
- **Outlet\_Size**: 2410 missing values filled with **mode**.
- **Item\_Visibility**: 526 zero values replaced with **median**.

### Column Dropping:

- **Dropped**: 'Item\_Identifier', 'Outlet\_Identifier' (these were considered unnecessary for analysis).

## Normalization:

- **Normalized Item\_Fat\_Content:**
  - ['Low Fat', 'Regular', 'low fat', 'LF', 'reg'] → ['Low Fat', 'Regular'] **Encoding:**
- **Item\_Fat\_Content:** Encoded into 2 classes (Low Fat, Regular).
- **Item\_Type:** Encoded into 16 classes (categories for item types).
- **Outlet\_Size:** Encoded into 3 classes (Small, Medium, Large).
- **Outlet\_Location\_Type:** Encoded into 3 classes (Rural, Semiurban, Urban). •  
**Outlet\_Type:** Encoded into 4 classes (Supermarket Type1, Type2, Type3, Grocery Store).

## Correlation Heatmap:

Correlation Among all Features

Strong Correlations

1. Outlet\_Size and Outlet\_Location\_Type: **-0.61**  
→ Smaller outlet sizes are more common in certain location types.
2. Item\_MRP and Item\_Outlet\_Sales: **0.57**  
→ Higher MRP items are generally associated with higher sales (this is also correlation with the target variable).

Moderate Correlations

1. Outlet\_Type and Item\_Outlet\_Sales: **0.40**  
→ Type of outlet moderately impacts sales.
2. Outlet\_Type and Outlet\_Location\_Type: **0.47**  
→ Certain outlet types are more common in specific locations.

Weak or Negligible Correlations ( $|r| < 0.2$ )

- Most other feature pairs show **very weak or no correlation**, such as:
  - Item\_Weight with any other feature.
  - Item\_Visibility with most features (except weak negative with Outlet\_Type: 0.18).
  - Item\_Type, Item\_Fat\_Content, and Outlet\_Establishment\_Year also show low correlation with others.



Figure 1.1

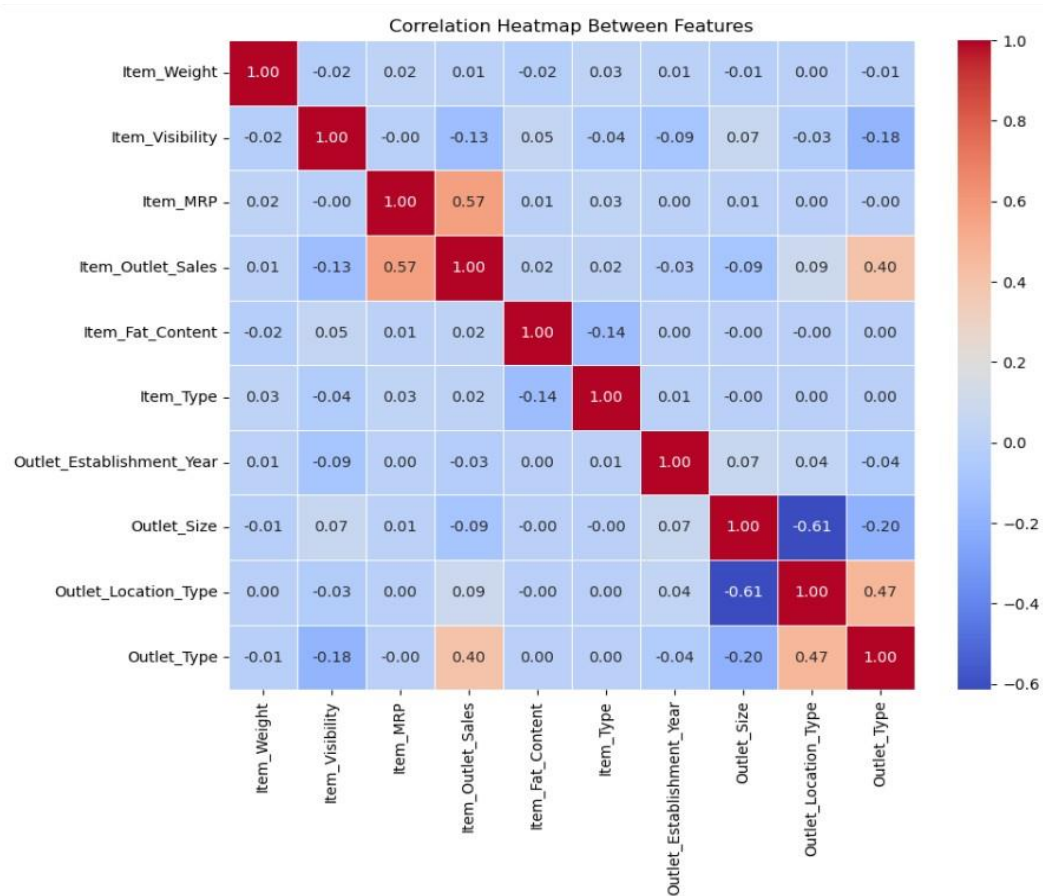
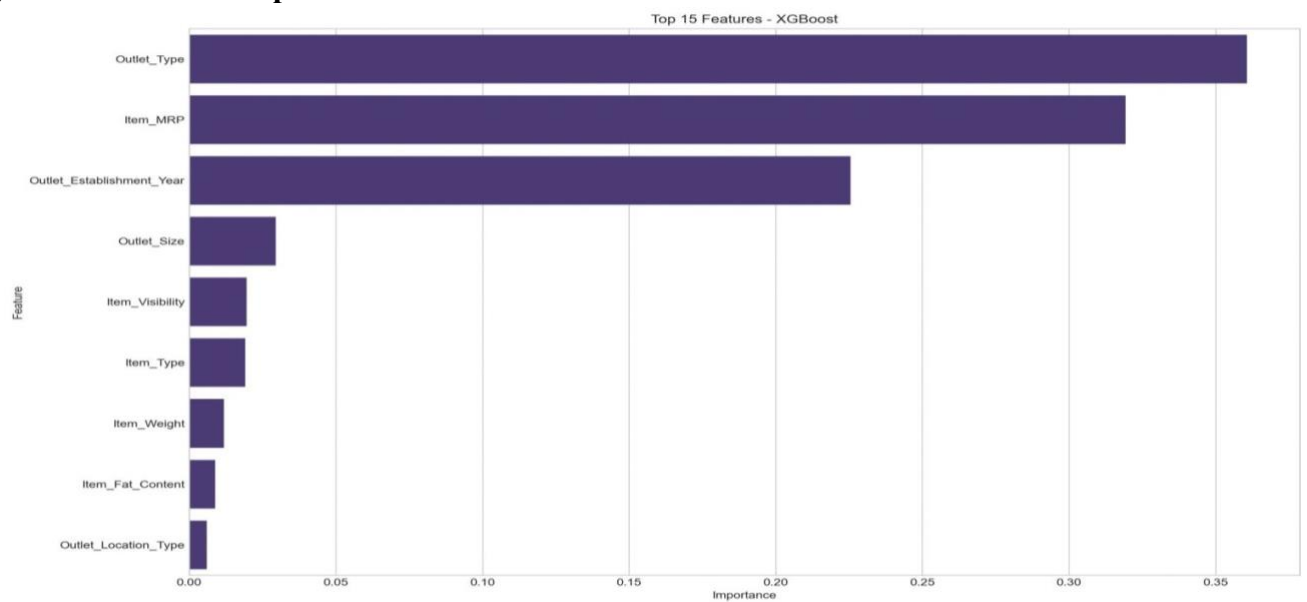
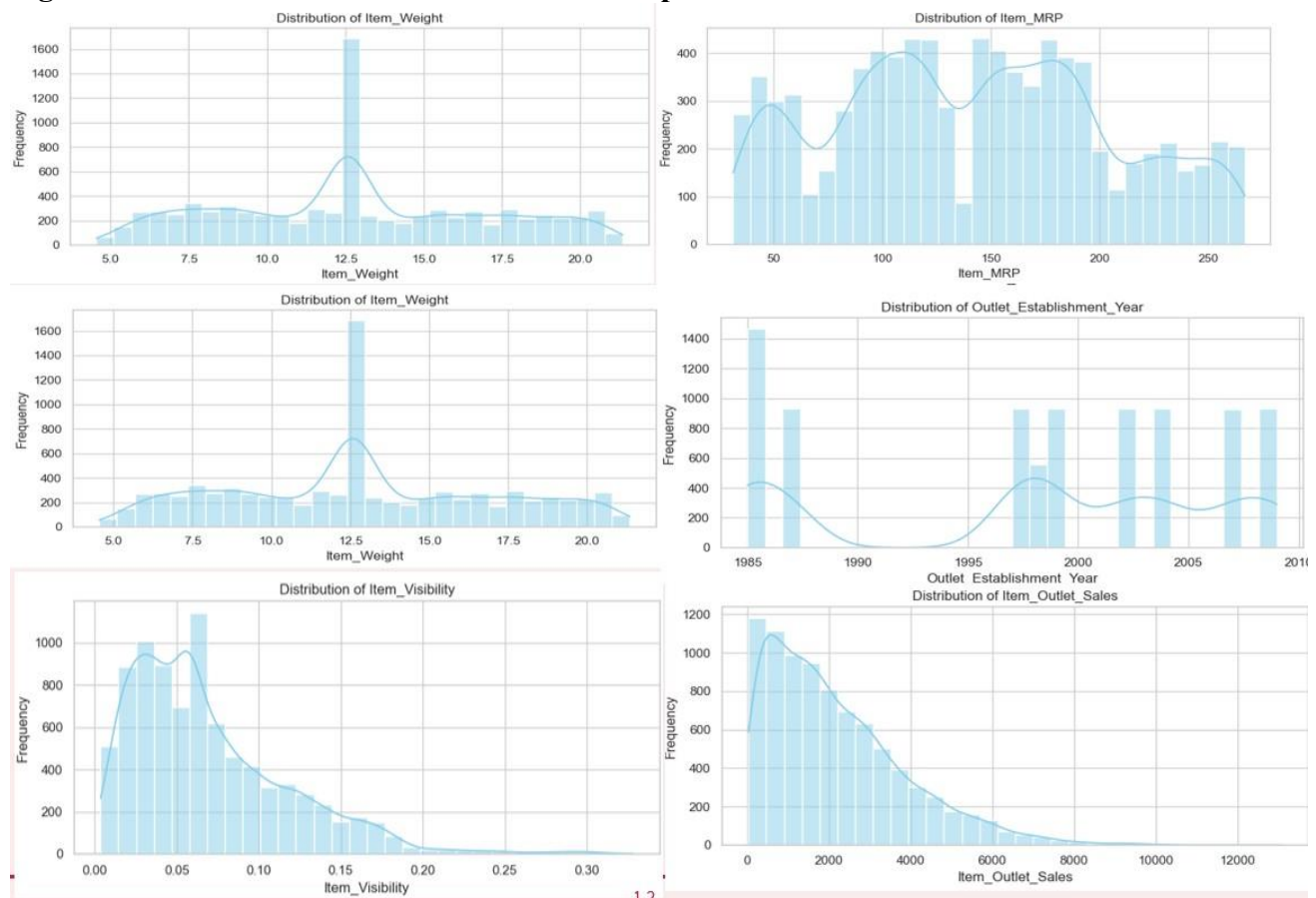


Figure 1.2 Feature Importance:

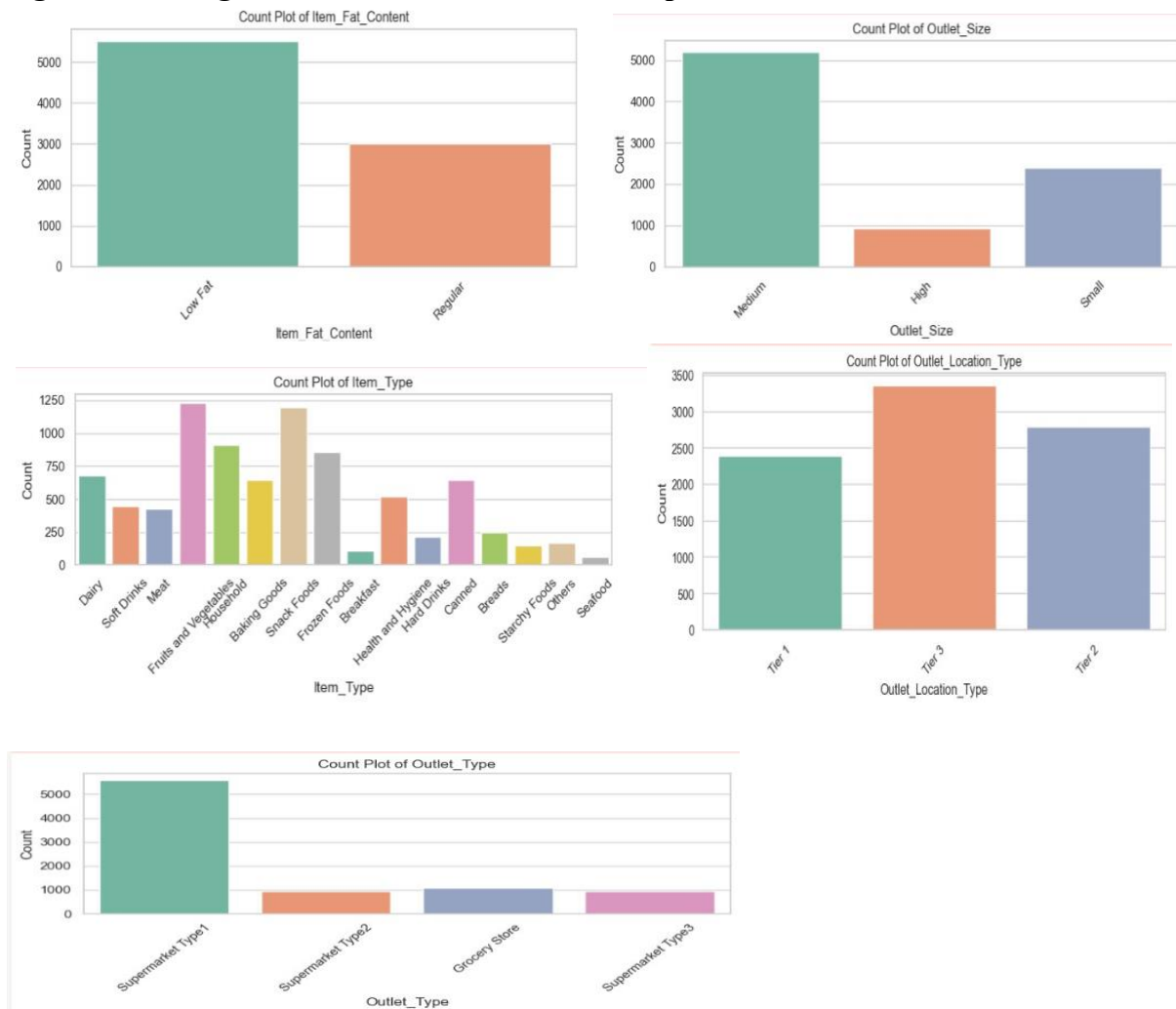


- **Outlet\_Type:** The type of outlet (e.g., supermarket vs. grocery) is the single most influential predictor of sales (0.361).
- **Item\_MRP:** The item's maximum retail price strongly drives sales, with higher-priced items selling more (0.319).
- **Outlet\_Establishment\_Year:** The age of the outlet influences sales patterns, making establishment year important (0.225).
- **Outlet\_Size:** Larger outlets moderately boost sales compared to smaller ones (0.029).
- **Item\_Visibility:** How prominently an item is displayed has a small yet meaningful effect on its sales (0.020).
- **Item\_Type:** The category of the item (e.g., dairy, snacks) slightly affects sales performance (0.019).
- **Item\_Weight:** The weight of the item contributes minimally to predicting sales (0.012).
- **Item\_Fat\_Content:** Whether an item is low-fat or regular has a minor impact on sales (0.009)
- **Outlet\_Location\_Type:** The urban/semiurban/rural classification of the outlet plays a small predictive role (0.006).

**Figure 1.3: Numerical Feature Distribution Graphs**



**Figure 1.4 Categorical Features Distribution Graphs:**



### 3.6 : Model building:

#### Feature Engineering (FE)

- **Handling Missing Data:** Fill missing values in Item\_Weight and Outlet\_Size using the median and mode, respectively.
- **Handling Zero Values:** Replace zero values in Item\_Visibility with the median.
- **Encoding Categorical Variables:** Encode Item\_Fat\_Content, Item\_Type, Outlet\_Size, Outlet\_Location\_Type, and Outlet\_Type using one-hot encoding or label encoding.
- **Dropping Irrelevant Features:** Drop Item\_Identifier and Outlet\_Identifier as they don't contribute to the model.

## Model Selection & Justification

### XGBoost:

- A highly efficient gradient boosting model known for its speed and performance, excelling in handling complex, non-linear relationships and large datasets.
- **Performance:** Best overall performance with the lowest **MSE**, **RMSE**, and **MAE**, and a strong  **$R^2 = 0.6176$** .

### MLP Regressor:

- A type of neural network for regression tasks, capable of learning non-linear relationships through multiple layers of nodes. It can perform well but may require significant data preprocessing and tuning.
- **Performance:** Slightly worse than XGBoost with an **RMSE = 1027.67** and  **$R^2 = 0.6114$** .

### Gradient Boosting:

- An ensemble method that builds weak learners (typically decision trees) sequentially, with each learner focusing on the errors of the previous one. It performs well but can be sensitive to overfitting if not tuned properly.
- **Performance:** Comparable to MLP Regressor, with very similar metrics but slightly worse performance.

### Decision Tree:

- A simple yet powerful model that splits the data into branches based on feature values, providing a clear decision path. It's prone to overfitting but can be pruned to improve generalization.
- **Performance:** Slightly worse than Gradient Boosting with  **$R^2 = 0.6094$** .

### Random Forest:

- An ensemble of decision trees, where each tree is trained on a random subset of the data and features. It reduces overfitting compared to a single decision tree and is robust to noise in the data.
- **Performance:** Slightly worse than Decision Tree with  **$R^2 = 0.6043$** .

### LightGBM:

- A gradient boosting framework designed for efficiency and scalability, particularly on large datasets. It uses histogram-based learning to speed up training while maintaining high accuracy.
- **Performance:** Similar to Random Forest, with a slightly higher **MSE** and a marginally lower  **$R^2$** .

### Lasso Regression:

- A linear regression model that applies L1 regularization, encouraging sparsity in the model by forcing some coefficients to zero. It is useful for feature selection but struggles with complex relationships.
- **Performance:** Larger errors with  **$R^2 = 0.5247$** .

### Linear Regression:

- A simple statistical model that assumes a linear relationship between the input features and the target. It's easy to interpret but limited when the relationships are non-linear.
- **Performance:** Almost identical to **Lasso Regression**, with similar performance metrics.

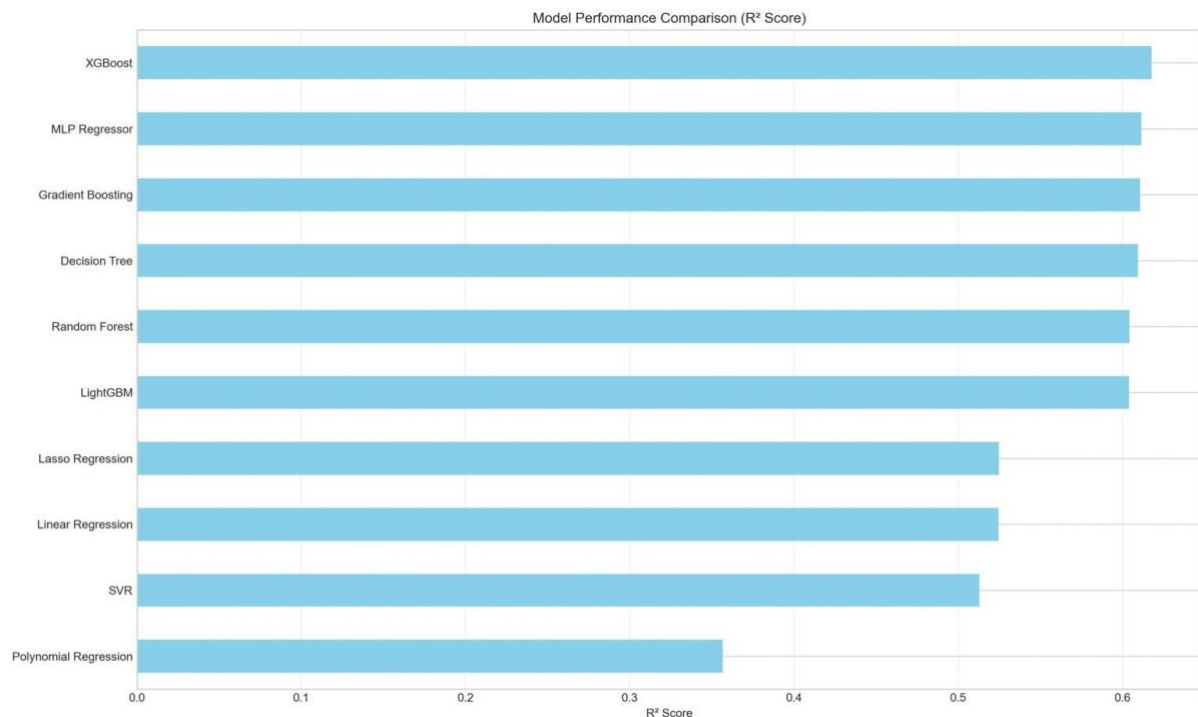
### SVR (Support Vector Regression):

- A type of Support Vector Machine (SVM) used for regression tasks, aiming to find a function that deviates from the true values by less than a specified margin. It works well with non-linear relationships but is sensitive to hyperparameters.
- **Performance:** Performs worse with a significantly higher **MSE** and a lower  **$R^2 = 0.5130$** .

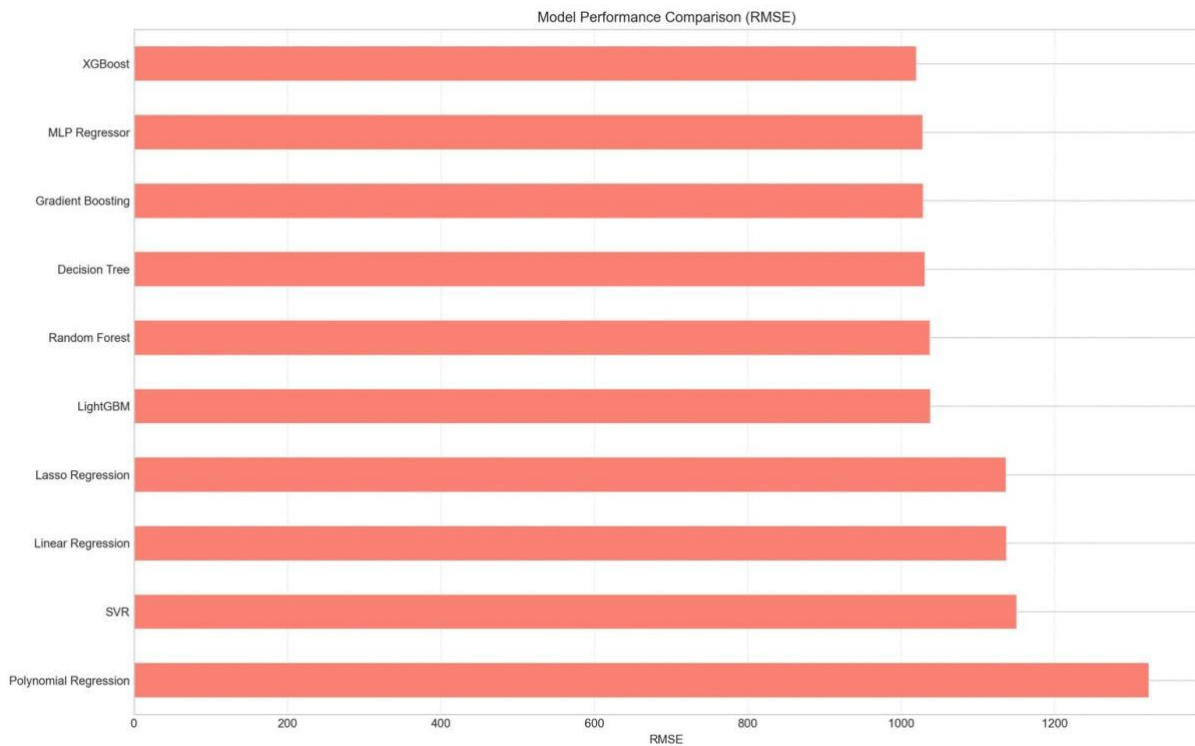
### Polynomial Regression:

- A form of linear regression where the relationship between the independent and dependent variables is modeled as an nth-degree polynomial. It's prone to overfitting, especially with high-degree polynomials.
- **Performance:** The least effective model with the lowest  **$R^2 = 0.3565$** .

**Figure 1.5: R – Squared Score Graph:**



**Figure 1.6 RMSE Graph:**



**Table 1.1: Model evaluation table**

Model	MSE	RMSE	MAE	R <sup>2</sup>
XGBoost	1.04E+06	1019.454035	716.815724	0.617624
MLP Regressor	1.06E+06	1027.674896	727.198786	0.611432
Gradient Boosting	1.06E+06	1028.59025	721.367656	0.61074
Decision Tree	1.06E+06	1030.36526	723.6076	0.609395
Random Forest	1.08E+06	1037.053622	726.473076	0.604308
LightGBM	1.08E+06	1037.63825	746.174559	0.603861
Lasso Regression	1.29E+06	1136.61236	855.143867	0.524687

Linear Regression	1.29E+06	1136.713497	855.38129	0.524602
SVR	1.32E+06	1150.526308	847.748442	0.512978
Polynomial Regression	1.75E+06	1322.489524	978.353348	0.356513

## WHY XGBOOST?

XGBoost outperforms all other models, achieving the best trade-off between error metrics and explanatory power. Models like MLP Regressor and Gradient Boosting follow closely, while more traditional models like Lasso Regression and Polynomial Regression are less effective for this problem.

### Model Implementation

- Data Splitting: Split the data into training and test sets (80%,20%).
- Model Training: Train the XGBoost regressor using the training data.

### Model Evaluation

- Metrics Used:
- Mean Absolute Error (MAE): Measures average errors between predicted and actual values.
- Mean Squared Error (MSE): Penalizes larger errors more heavily.
- R<sup>2</sup> Score: Indicates the proportion of variance in the target variable explained by the model.

## 4 . Implementation and Results:

Frontend: HTML, CSS (via Django templates)

Backend: Python, Django

Database: SQLite (default Django DB)

Machine Learning: XGBoost, Scikit-learn, Pandas

Deployment Ready: Model saved as .pkl, easily portable

Web page is created using Django, SQLite & Machine Learning Integration:

### Django handles:

- Web routing and view logic
- HTML rendering via templates
- Form and file handling for user input
- Integration with ML model (.pkl) for predictions

### SQLite handles:

- Data storage using db.sqlite3
- Lightweight, file-based relational database
- Managed through Django's ORM (Object-Relational Mapper)
- Used to store user data, logs, or results if needed

### Machine Learning integration:

- Trained using XGBoost Regressor
- Model serialized with joblib as xgb\_model.pkl
- Auto-loaded by Django during file upload
- Makes predictions in real-time on uploaded data

Figure1.7:

The screenshot displays a web application titled "BigMart Sales Prediction" with a sub-header "Add Sales Record". The form contains the following fields and values:

- Item Identifier: 1
- Item Weight: 10.0
- Item Fat Content: Regular (dropdown menu)
- Item Visibility: 0.1
- Item Type: Dairy Product
- Item MRP: 20.0
- Outlet Identifier: out123
- Outlet Establishment Year: 2007
- Outlet Size: Small (dropdown menu)
- Outlet Location Type: Tier 2 (dropdown menu)
- Outlet Type: Supermarket Type2 (dropdown menu)

At the bottom of the form are two buttons: "Save" and "Back".

This clean and user-friendly interface for the BigMart Sales Prediction system provides an intuitive form for inputting detailed product and outlet information.

This form allows users to enter new data into the system so that the model can use it for predicting sales

### Action Buttons:

- Save – Submits the entered information to the backend or database.
- Back – Returns to the previous page without saving.



Figure 1.8:

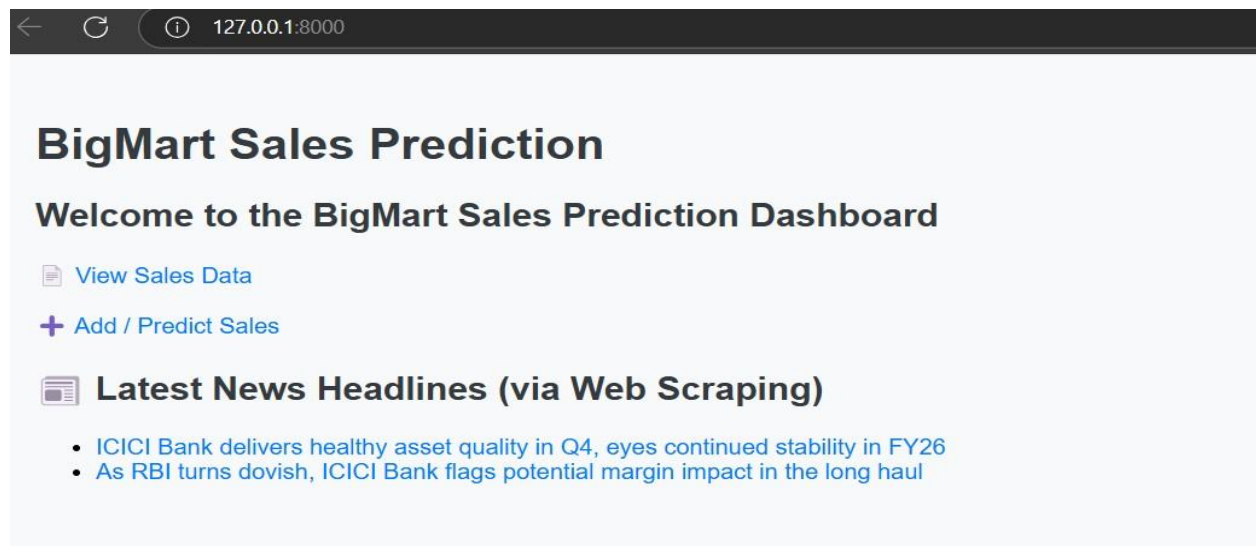
BigMart Sales Prediction			
Sales Data			
<a href="#">Add Record</a>			
ID	Item	Sales	Actions
2	2004	1367.12353515625	<a href="#">Edit</a> <a href="#">Delete</a>
3	201	6806.7236328125	<a href="#">Edit</a> <a href="#">Delete</a>
6	202	2578.30078125	<a href="#">Edit</a> <a href="#">Delete</a>
7	1	494.4046630859375	<a href="#">Edit</a> <a href="#">Delete</a>

This page acts as a **data dashboard**, showing all item entries and their predicted sales values.

Features:

- Add Record – A clickable link at the top that navigates the user back to the data entry form (as seen in the first picture), allowing the addition of new item records.
- Edit/Delete Functionality – Users can update or remove existing records, making it easy to manage data in the system.

Figure 1.9: Django Admin panel:



**Web scraping** is the automated process of extracting data from websites. It is widely used to collect information such as product prices, news articles, stock data, or social media content from publicly available web pages.

BeautifulSoup – Parses and extracts data from HTML/XML documents.

requests – Sends HTTP requests to fetch webpage content.

## 5. Conclusion:

This project successfully integrates a full-stack machine learning application using the Django web framework and a pre-trained XGBoost regression model for sales prediction. The application allows users to upload CSV datasets, which are automatically preprocessed and passed to the ML model for generating real-time predictions. The results are then rendered in a user-friendly format on the web interface.

Django plays a crucial role in handling routing, frontend rendering, and backend logic, while SQLite provides lightweight and efficient database support for data persistence. The Django Admin Panel adds additional convenience by enabling secure management of users and data records.

Alongside this, web scraping techniques such as BeautifulSoup and Selenium were discussed as potential methods for collecting external data for machine learning or analytics purposes.

Overall, the system showcases the practical application of machine learning in a web environment and demonstrates how open-source technologies like Django, SQLite, and XGBoost can be seamlessly combined to deliver an intelligent, scalable, and interactive data-driven application.

## 6.REFERENCES:

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## 7.List of Publications based on this research work

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