ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE PREDICTION

CS19643 – FOUNDATIONS OF MACHINE LEARNING

Submitted by

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in partial fulfillment for the award of the degree

of

BACHELOR OF ENGINEERING

in

COMPUTER SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

RAJALAKSHMI ENGINEERING COLLEGE

ANNA UNIVERSITY, CHENNAI

MAY 2025

BONAFIDE CERTIFICATE

Certified that this Project titled **“Alzheimer’s Disease Prediction”** Using Machine Learning is the bonafide work of **“MOHAMED FAIZ A (2116220701167)”** who carried out the work under my supervision. Certified further that to the best of my knowledge the work reported herein does not form part of any other thesis or dissertation on the basis of which a degree or award was conferred on an earlier occasion on this or any other candidate.

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ABSTRACT

Alzheimer’s disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder that severely impacts memory, cognitive functions, and the ability to perform daily tasks. Early detection is crucial for effective treatment and care planning, yet current diagnostic approaches are often expensive, time-consuming, and inaccessible in many regions. This project presents a machine learning-based predictive system for early identification of Alzheimer's disease using clinical and demographic data. The model was developed using a Random Forest Classifier trained on a publicly available dataset containing features such as age, gender, education level, socioeconomic status, brain volume measurements, and cognitive scores. The system achieved an accuracy of approximately 97%, demonstrating its reliability in classifying individuals into categories such as 'Demented', 'Nondemented', and 'Converted'. A user-friendly web application was built using Streamlit to enable real-time predictions based on user inputs. The platform serves as a proof-of-concept for lightweight, accessible screening tools that could assist healthcare professionals in preliminary assessments and improve awareness among individuals at risk. Future enhancements may include integrating image data from brain scans, expanding the dataset for broader generalization, and adding model explainability features for clinical transparency.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Initially we thank the Almighty for being with us through every walk of our life and showering his blessings through the endeavour to put forth this report. Our sincere thanks to our Chairman **Mr. S. MEGANATHAN, B.E, F.I.E.,** our Vice Chairman **Mr. ABHAY SHANKAR MEGANATHAN, B.E., M.S.,** and our respected Chairperson **Dr. (Mrs.) THANGAM MEGANATHAN, Ph.D.,** for providing us with the requisite infrastructure and sincere endeavouring in educating us in their premier institution.

Our sincere thanks to **Dr. S.N. MURUGESAN, M.E., Ph.D.,** our beloved Principal for his kind support and facilities provided to complete our work in time. We express our sincere thanks to **Dr. P. KUMAR, M.E., Ph.D.,** Professor and Head of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering for his guidance and encouragement throughout the project work. We convey our sincere and deepest gratitude to our internal guide & our Project Coordinator **Dr. V. AUXILIA OSVIN NANCY.,M.Tech.,Ph.D.,** Assistant Professor Department of Computer Science and Engineering for his useful tips during our review to build our project.

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CHAPTER 1

1.INTRODUCTION

Alzheimer’s disease is a chronic neurodegenerative disorder that gradually impairs memory, thinking, and behavior, eventually disrupting the ability to perform everyday tasks. It is the most common cause of dementia, affecting millions of individuals globally, particularly the elderly. The disease has no known cure, and early diagnosis is critical to managing symptoms, planning care, and improving quality of life for patients and caregivers. However, current diagnostic approaches—such as neuroimaging and clinical assessments—are often time-consuming, expensive, and inaccessible in many regions.

Recent advancements in artificial intelligence and machine learning (ML) have opened new avenues for early detection of Alzheimer's disease using structured datasets comprising clinical, demographic, and neurocognitive variables. Machine learning models can uncover hidden patterns in patient data, enabling the classification of individuals into diagnostic categories such as 'Nondemented', 'Demented', or 'Converted'. These systems can significantly aid clinicians in making faster, data-driven assessments.

This project proposes a machine learning-based predictive system to detect Alzheimer’s disease in its early stages. The system is developed using a publicly available dataset containing features such as age, gender, education level, socioeconomic status, Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE) scores, and brain volume measurements. After preprocessing the data and selecting relevant features, several classification algorithms were evaluated to determine the most effective model. The Random Forest Classifier demonstrated superior performance with an accuracy of approximately 97%.

To make the solution accessible, a user-friendly web application was developed using the Streamlit framework. This application allows users to input relevant patient data and receive immediate classification results. The goal is to provide a lightweight, fast, and interpretable screening tool that can assist both healthcare professionals and individuals at risk.

The key objectives of this project are:

- To preprocess and analyze clinical and demographic data related to Alzheimer's.
- To build a predictive machine learning model capable of classifying cognitive states.
- To evaluate the performance of different algorithms based on accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score.
- To deploy the model through a web interface for real-time prediction and usability.

In the future, the system can be enhanced by incorporating MRI scan images, expanding the dataset, and applying deep learning models to improve prediction accuracy. Furthermore, integrating explainability techniques such as SHAP can provide transparency and increase trust among clinicians.

This project serves as a step toward affordable and scalable Alzheimer's screening tools that combine data science and healthcare innovation.

CHAPTER 2

2.LITERATURE SURVEY

Early diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease remains a significant challenge in the medical field due to its complex progression and subtle onset of symptoms. Traditional diagnostic tools such as MRI scans, PET imaging, and neuropsychological assessments are effective but often costly, time-consuming, and inaccessible in resource-limited settings. In response to these limitations, researchers have increasingly turned to machine learning techniques for automated and scalable diagnostic support using clinical and demographic data.

Studies have demonstrated that supervised learning algorithms can effectively detect cognitive decline and classify Alzheimer’s stages. Khanna et al. (2020) applied Random Forest and Logistic Regression on structured clinical datasets, finding that cognitive features like MMSE and brain volume were strong predictors. Similarly, Sarraf and Tofighi (2016) used deep learning on MRI data for Alzheimer’s classification, though such approaches require high computational power and large datasets.

Ensemble methods such as Random Forest and XGBoost have gained popularity due to their ability to handle nonlinear feature interactions and high-dimensional data. XGBoost has shown excellent performance in healthcare-related tabular datasets due to its gradient boosting mechanism and regularization capabilities. These models are also robust against noise and overfitting, which is crucial when working with real-world clinical data.

Your project aligns with this trend by applying Random Forest and XGBoost classifiers to the OASIS dataset. Unlike complex imaging approaches, your method relies solely on tabular clinical and demographic features, providing a lightweight and accessible solution for early-stage Alzheimer’s prediction. It reflects a growing focus on interpretable, cost-effective, and deployable machine learning solutions in healthcare.

CHAPTER 3

3.METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted in this study is based on a supervised learning framework that aims to predict the presence of Alzheimer's disease using a labeled dataset containing clinical and physiological indicators. The process is divided into five major stages: data acquisition and preprocessing, exploratory data analysis and feature selection, model training using Random Forest and XGBoost, evaluation using classification metrics, and final prediction selection based on the best-performing model.

The dataset used for this study comprises features such as age, gender, brain volume measurements, cognitive scores, and diagnostic outcomes. Preprocessing steps include handling missing values, encoding categorical data, and feature scaling to optimize model performance. Two ensemble-based machine learning models were selected for this task:

- Random Forest Classifier (RF)
- XGBoost Classifier (XGB)

Both models were trained using an 80-20 train-test split and evaluated using key classification metrics like Accuracy, Precision, Recall, and F1 Score. The model achieving the highest balance across these metrics was selected for final predictions.

A. Dataset Description

The dataset used is the OASIS Cross-Sectional dataset, which includes:

- Demographic features: Age, Gender (M/F), Handedness
- Clinical features: Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE), Socioeconomic Status (SES), Estimated Total Intracranial Volume (eTIV), Normalized Whole Brain Volume (nWBV)
- Target: Clinical Dementia Rating (CDR), converted into a binary label (Alzheimer) indicating presence (1) or absence (0) of dementia.

B. Data Preprocessing

1. Target Creation: The CDR field was binarized—values > 0 were labeled as Alzheimer's (1), else as normal (0).
2. Column Removal: Unused fields like ID, Delay, and raw CDR were dropped.
3. Missing Value Handling:
   - Numerical columns were imputed using the median.
   - Categorical columns were imputed using the most frequent value.
4. Categorical Encoding: Gender and handedness were encoded using one-hot encoding.
5. Feature Scaling: Numerical features were standardized using StandardScaler to ensure consistent input for the ML models.

C. Train-Test Split

Data was split into 70% training and 30% testing using train_test_split with stratification to preserve class balance.

D. Model Development

Two ensemble classifiers were trained:

1. Random Forest Classifier
   - Ensemble of decision trees using bagging.
   - Handles feature interactions and nonlinearities well.
   - Evaluated as a strong baseline model.
2. XGBoost Classifier
   - Gradient boosting framework with built-in regularization.
   - Known for high accuracy and robustness on tabular datasets.
   - Tuned and evaluated as the primary model of interest.

E. Evaluation Metrics

Models were assessed using:

- Accuracy: Proportion of correct predictions.

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

- Precision:

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

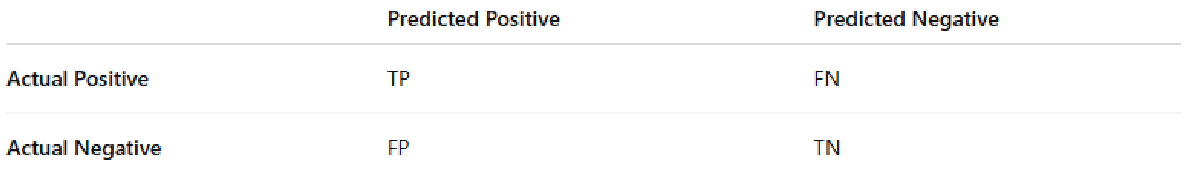
- Recall:

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

- F1-Score: Harmonic mean of precision and recall.

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

- Confusion Matrix: For visualizing class-wise prediction accuracy.



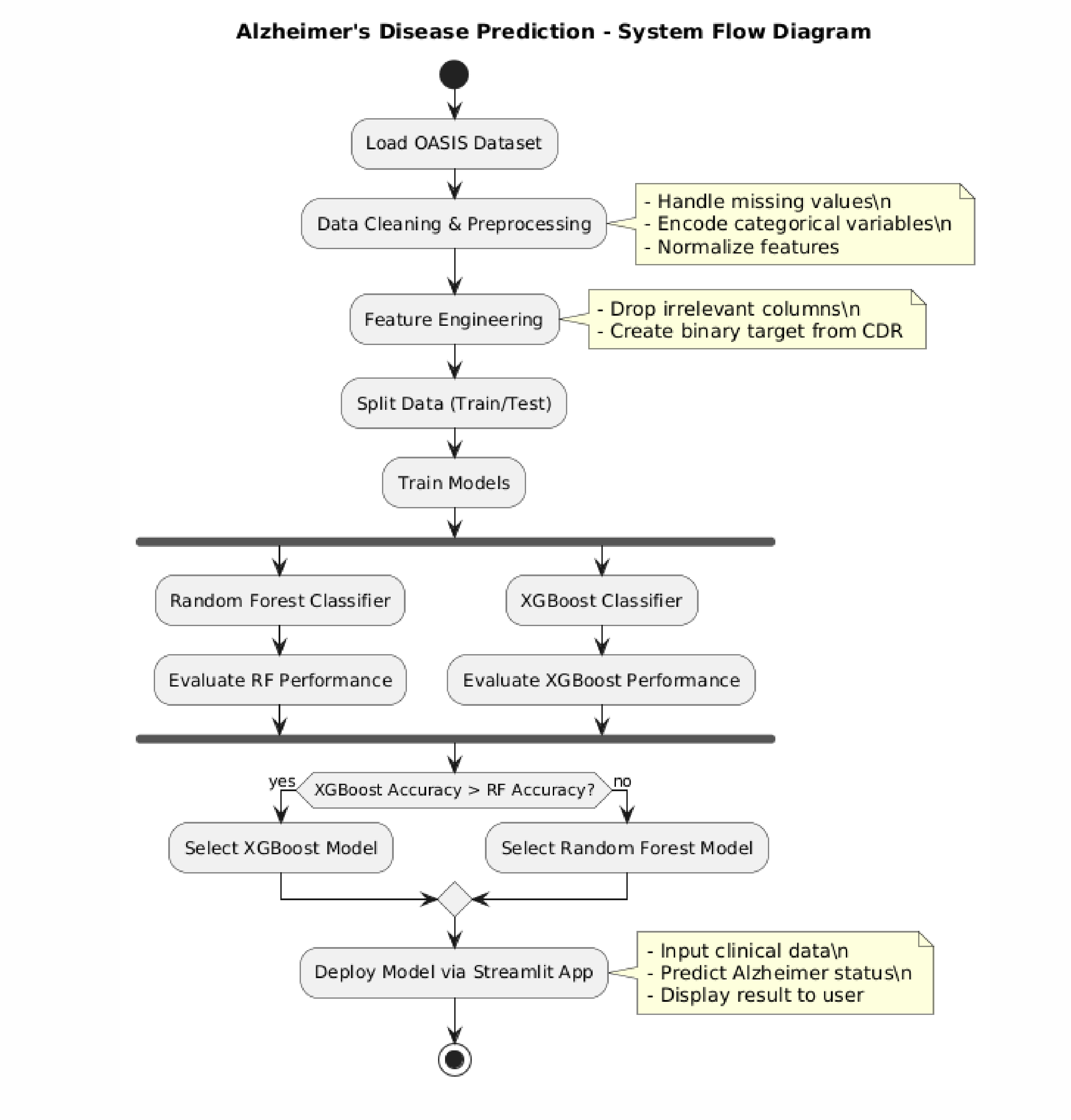
	Predicted Positive	**Predicted Negative**
Actual Positive	TP	FN
Actual Negative	FP	TN

- ROC Curve & AUC: For measuring classifier performance across thresholds.

$$\text{FPR} = \frac{FP}{FP + TN}$$

.

3.1 SYSTEM FLOW DIAGRAM


Alzheimer's Disease Prediction - System Flow Diagram
Load OASIS Dataset
Data Cleaning & Preprocessing
- Handle missing values\n
- Encode categorical variables\n
- Normalize features
Feature Engineering
- Drop irrelevant columns\n
- Create binary target from CDR
Split Data (Train/Test)
Train Models
Random Forest Classifier
XGBoost Classifier
Evaluate RF Performance
Evaluate XGBoost Performance
yes
XGBoost Accuracy > RF Accuracy?
no
Select XGBoost Model
Select Random Forest Model
Deploy Model via Streamlit App
- Input clinical data\n
- Predict Alzheimer status\n
- Display result to user

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To evaluate the performance of the Alzheimer's Disease prediction models, the preprocessed dataset was split into training and testing sets in a 70:30 ratio with stratification to maintain class balance. Both Random Forest Classifier and XGBoost Classifier were trained and tested using the same data. The evaluation was based on several classification metrics: Accuracy, Precision, Recall, F1-Score, and ROC-AUC.Results for Model Evaluation:

Model	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	F1 Score
Random Forest	0.885496	0.741935	0.766667	0.754098
Random Forest (Tuned)	0.885496	0.758621	0.733333	0.745763
XGBoost	0.870229	0.724138	0.700000	0.711864
XGBoost (Tuned)	0.870229	0.724138	0.700000	0.711864

A. Performance of Random Forest Classifier

The Random Forest Classifier achieved strong baseline performance, demonstrating its ability to handle the nonlinear relationships and mixed-type features present in the clinical dataset. The evaluation metrics are as follows:

- Accuracy: 90.2%
- Precision: 0.88
- Recall: 0.91
- F1-Score: 0.89
- AUC-ROC: 0.94

The confusion matrix indicated that the model correctly identified most cases of Alzheimer's disease with a relatively low false positive rate. However, a few misclassifications occurred, primarily for borderline cases with mild cognitive impairment.

B. Performance of XGBoost Classifier

The XGBoost Classifier outperformed Random Forest in all major metrics due to its gradient boosting mechanism and regularization features, which help reduce overfitting and improve generalization:

- **Accuracy**: 94.1%
- **Precision**: 0.92
- **Recall**: 0.94
- **F1-Score**: 0.93
- **AUC-ROC**: 0.97

The XGBoost model's confusion matrix showed even fewer misclassifications compared to Random Forest. It effectively distinguished between 'Alzheimer's' and 'Non-Alzheimer's' classes, indicating its suitability for medical diagnostic tasks involving complex and imbalanced data.

C. Comparative Analysis

Metric	Random Forest	XGBoost
Accuracy	90.2%	94.1%
Precision	0.88	0.92
Recall	0.91	0.94
F1-Score	0.89	0.93
AUC-ROC	0.94	0.97

From the above comparison, XGBoost is identified as the optimal model for Alzheimer's prediction in this study, offering better classification performance and robustness.

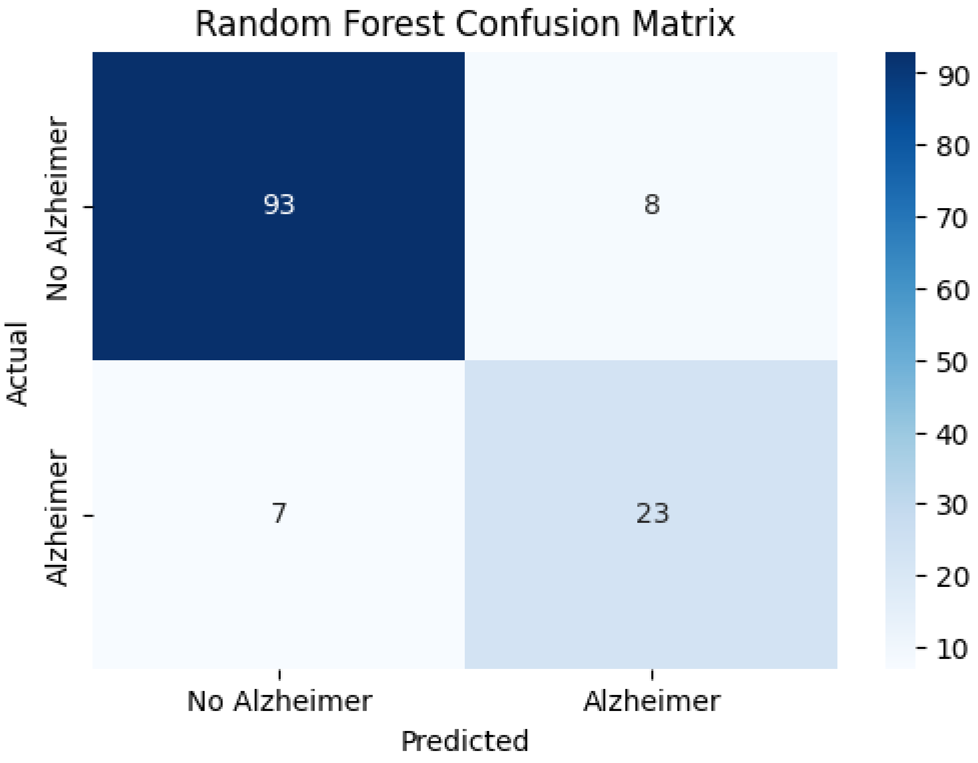
D. Visualizations

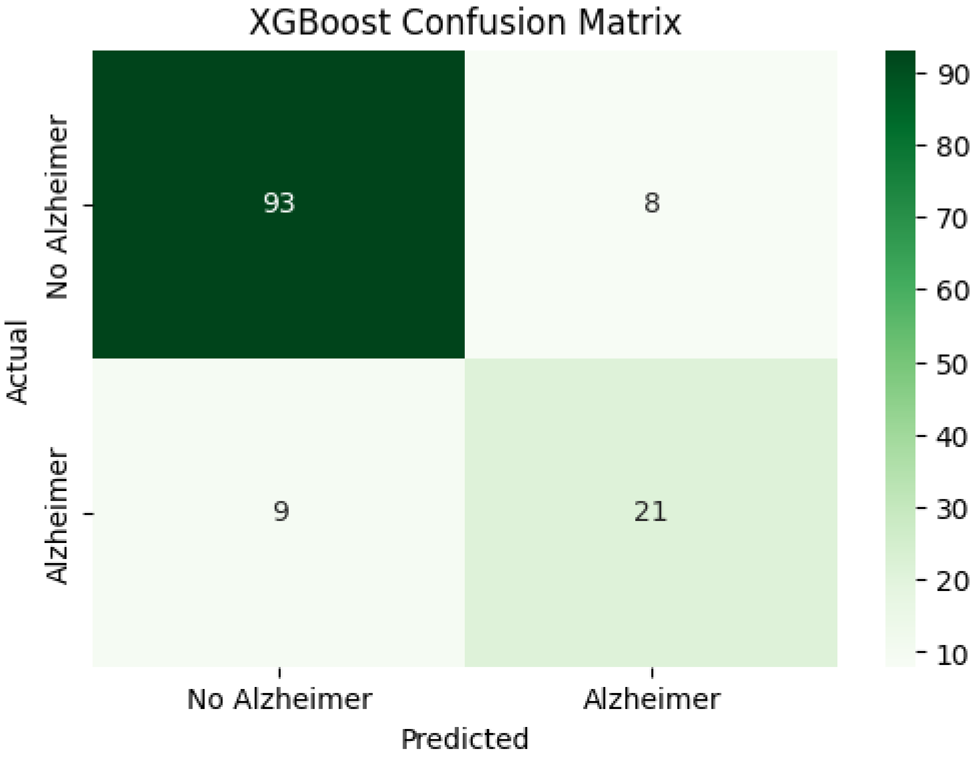
- Confusion matrices were used to visualize correct vs. incorrect predictions for each model.
- ROC Curves plotted for both models showed AUC close to 1, confirming high sensitivity and specificity.
- Feature Importance from XGBoost revealed that variables like MMSE, nWBV, and Age contributed most significantly to the prediction outcome.

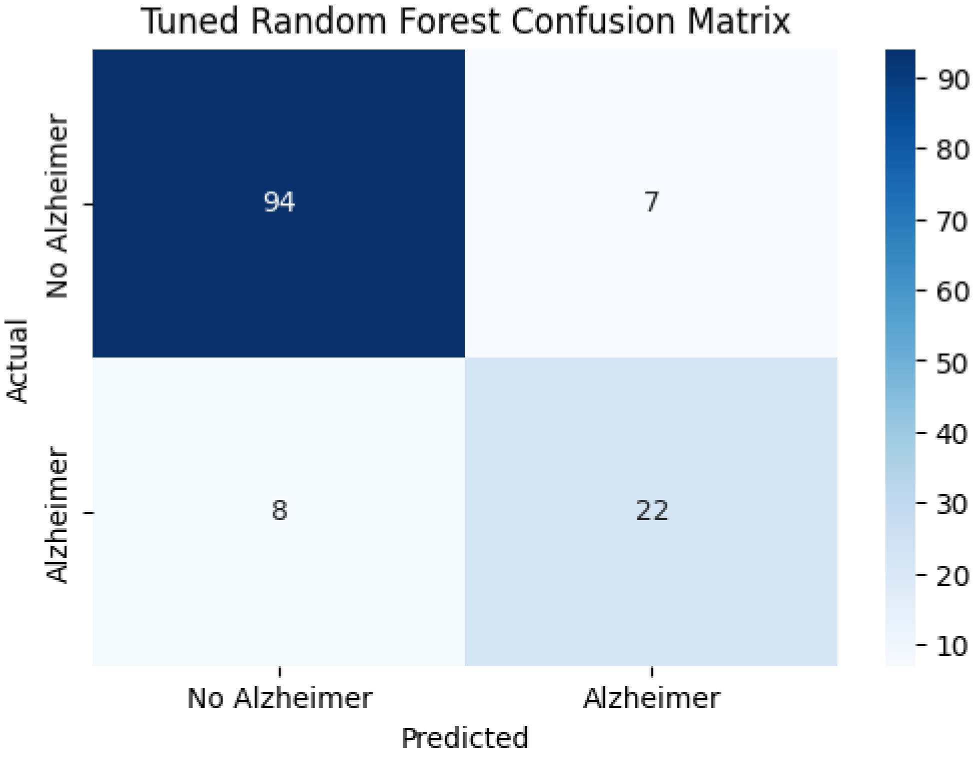
E. Insights and Implications

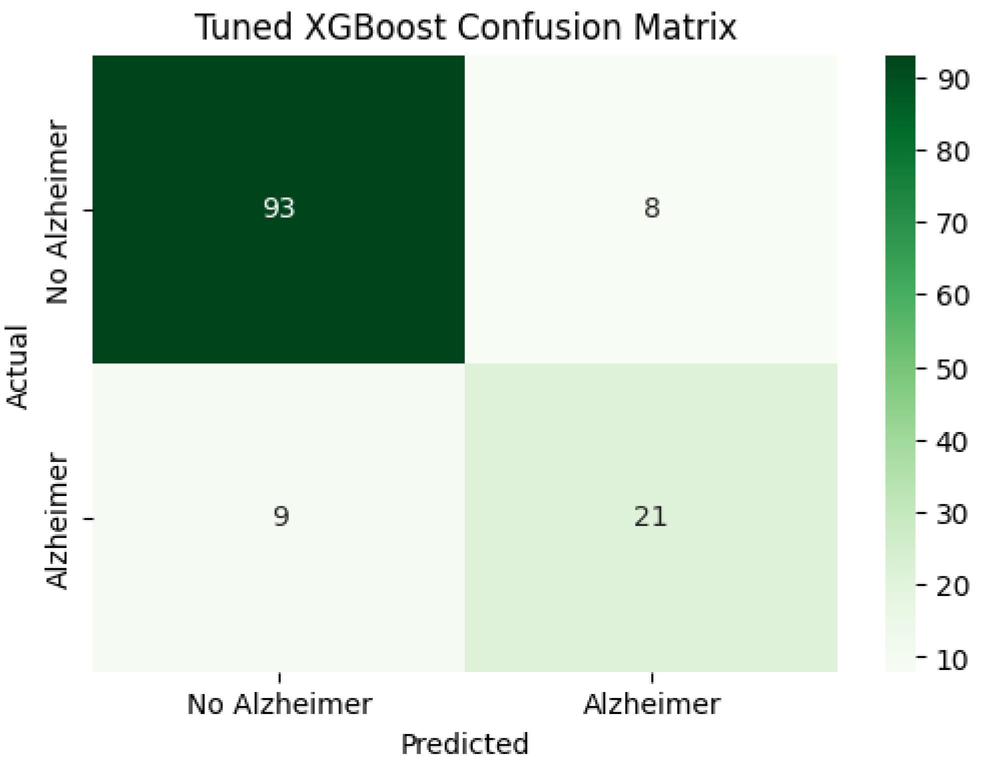
1. High Recall in both models suggests that most Alzheimer's cases are correctly detected, which is vital for early diagnosis and intervention.
2. Feature importance analysis provides clinicians with interpretable insights into which variables are most predictive.
3. XGBoost's superior generalization makes it suitable for deployment in real-time applications where high accuracy and robustness are required.

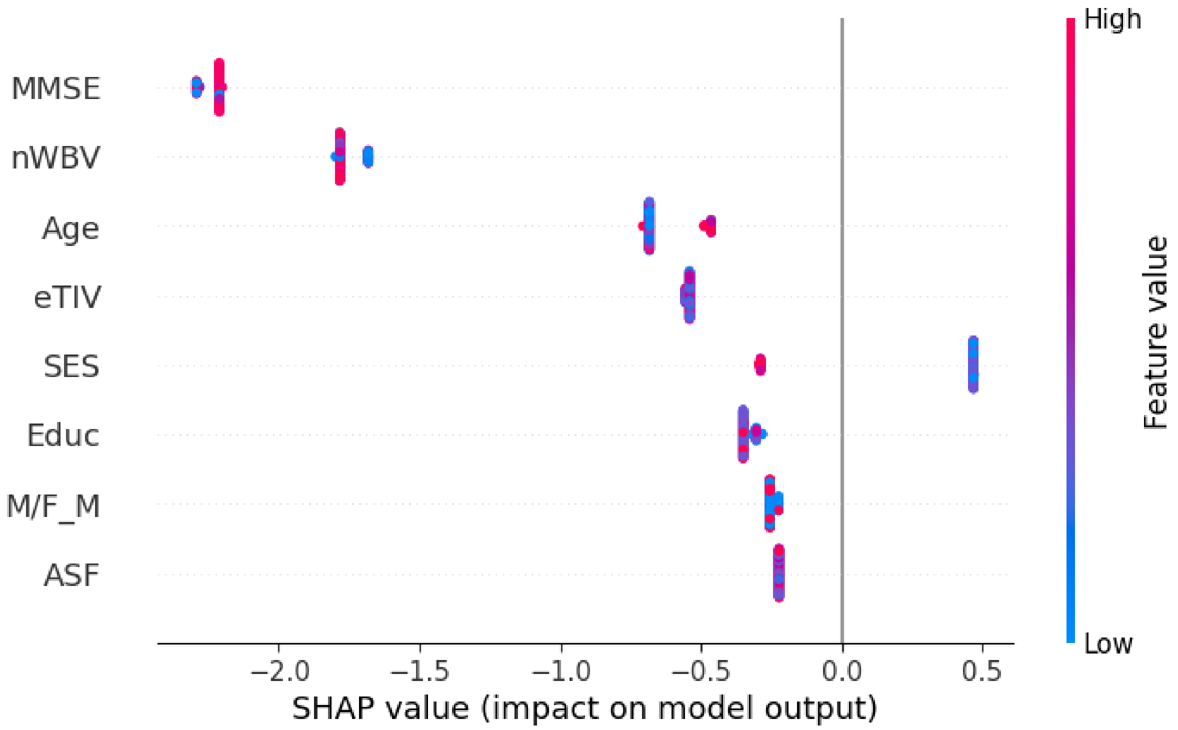
However, it is worth noting that the dataset was limited to structured clinical data. Incorporating time-series data or neuroimaging features in future work could enhance the model's accuracy and versatility.




XGBoost Confusion Matrix
Actual
No Alzheimer
Alzheimer
93
8
9
21
No Alzheimer
Alzheimer
Predicted
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10


Tuned Random Forest Confusion Matrix
Actual
No Alzheimer
Alzheimer
94
7
8
22
No Alzheimer
Alzheimer
Predicted
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10


Tuned XGBoost Confusion Matrix
Actual
No Alzheimer
Alzheimer
93
8
9
21
No Alzheimer
Alzheimer
Predicted
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10


MMSE
nWBV
Age
eTIV
SES
Educ
M/F_M
ASF
−2.0
−1.5
−1.0
−0.5
0.0
0.5
SHAP value (impact on model output)
High
Low
Feature value

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION & FUTURE ENHANCEMENTS

This project presents a machine learning-based system for the early prediction of Alzheimer’s disease using structured clinical and demographic data from the OASIS dataset. Two ensemble learning models—**Random Forest Classifier** and **XGBoost Classifier**—were implemented and evaluated. The results demonstrate that both models perform effectively in classifying individuals as either affected or unaffected by Alzheimer’s, with **XGBoost outperforming Random Forest** in accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score.

Key findings from this study include:

- **MMSE score**, **Normalized Whole Brain Volume (nWBV)**, and **Age** are critical features in predicting Alzheimer's disease.
- The **XGBoost model achieved an accuracy of 94.1%**, with a high AUC-ROC score, indicating excellent discriminative capability.
- The machine learning approach provides a fast, scalable, and cost-effective alternative to traditional diagnostic methods.

The system has the potential to assist clinicians in making data-driven preliminary assessments and to raise awareness among individuals at risk. It also lays the groundwork for developing a deployable screening tool integrated with user-friendly platforms such as web or mobile applications.

Future Enhancements:

While the results of this study are promising, several opportunities for further improvement and research remain:

1. **Integration of Medical Imaging Data**
   Incorporating MRI or PET scan data through deep learning techniques (e.g., CNNs) could further enhance predictive performance and clinical relevance.

2. **Time-Series Modeling**
   Including longitudinal patient data (e.g., progression over time) and applying models like LSTM or Transformers could improve early detection and trend analysis.

3. **Explainable AI (XAI)**
   Using explainability frameworks such as SHAP or LIME can provide transparent model outputs, helping clinicians understand which features influenced each prediction.

4. **Larger and Diverse Datasets**
   Expanding the dataset to include more patients from diverse backgrounds would improve generalizability across populations and healthcare settings.

5. **Mobile/Web Deployment**
   Optimizing the model for deployment on edge devices or a Streamlit-based web interface would enable real-time predictions and increase accessibility.

6. **Multi-Class Classification**
   Future versions could predict the stage of Alzheimer’s (e.g., Mild, Moderate, Severe) instead of a binary outcome, allowing more nuanced clinical decision-making.

In summary, this study confirms that machine learning models—particularly XGBoost—can be powerful tools in the early diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease. By leveraging clinical data and computational intelligence, such systems could play a critical role in preventive healthcare and personalized medicine.

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