A Review on Alzheimer's Disease Detection using Different Approaches

Vikash Kumar
Computer Science & Engineering
SAM College of Engineering & Technology
Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India
vikash8084060357@gmail.com

Devendra Rewadikar
Computer Science & Engineering
SAM College of Engineering & Technology
Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India
deverewadikar@gmail.com

Abstract

Millions of individuals worldwide suffer from Alzheimer's disease (AD), a progressive neurological ailment marked by memory loss and cognitive impairment. Effective treatment and management depend on early discovery, yet conventional diagnostic techniques, such clinical evaluations and cognitive testing, frequently fail to recognize the disease in its early stages. By analyzing complex datasets, including as neuroimaging, genetic data, and other biomarkers, machine learning (ML) has transformed the area of medical diagnostics and opened up new paths for the early and accurate identification of AD. This review paper offers an extensive summary of the many machine learning (ML) methods, including as supervised learning, unsupervised learning, and deep learning approaches, that are employed in the identification of AD. It draws attention to noteworthy related research that effectively apply these techniques to various kinds of data, indicating how efficient they are at enhancing diagnostic precision. The study also examines the benefits and drawbacks of each strategy, offering insights into the difficulties and potential paths for ML's use in AD detection in the future. This study intends to guide future research and promote the creation of more reliable, understandable, and integrated machine learning models for the early detection of Alzheimer's disease by examining these various approaches.

Keywords— *Alzheimer's Disease, Machine Learning, Neuroimaging, Early Diagnosis, Deep Learning, Biomarkers, Supervised Learning.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The most common cause of dementia globally is Alzheimer's disease (AD), which has a substantial effect on individuals, families, and healthcare systems. Timely implementation of therapies and slowing down the development of illness are contingent upon early diagnosis. However, early-stage AD is sometimes difficult to identify using conventional diagnostic techniques like clinical evaluations and cognitive testing. The application of machine learning (ML) has shown promise in improving the precision and effectiveness of AD diagnosis. ML models may find patterns and correlations in massive datasets that may not be visible with traditional approaches. This review paper gives an overview of the many machine learning techniques used to diagnose AD. It focuses on relevant research that has used these techniques to a variety of data sets, such as genetic data, neuroimaging, and other biomarkers. The goal of this review article is to present a thorough analysis of the many machine learning techniques used to identify Alzheimer's disease, with an emphasis on their advantages, disadvantages, and real-world applications. The format of the paper is as follows: We start by going over supervised learning methods, which have been applied extensively to AD classification problems. These methods include support vector machines (SVM), random forests (RF), and neural networks (NN). After that, we look at unsupervised learning strategies like clustering and dimensionality reduction, which may be helpful in deciphering patient groupings and streamlining intricate data. Next, we explore deep learning techniques like convolutional neural networks (CNNs) and recurrent neural networks (RNNs), which have demonstrated potential in the analysis of longitudinal data and neuroimaging [1].

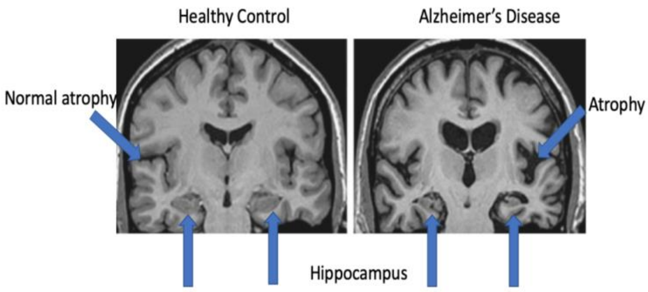

Fig. 1. Alzheimer Disease v/s Healthy Brain

Figure 1 shows the difference between healthy v/s Alzheimer disease [2].

Apart from these methodological debates, the study looks at particular uses of ML for AD identification in neuroimaging and genomic data analysis. We address how these methods have been used in practice and highlight important related papers that show how beneficial they are. In conclusion, we discuss the field's issues and future objectives, stressing the need for more integrated methods that mix various data sources and machine learning techniques, as well as larger, high-quality datasets and increased interpretability of models [3].

II. Related Works

Machine learning (ML) has become a potent technique in recent years that can improve Alzheimer's disease early detection and diagnosis. Large, multi-dimensional datasets, including genetic, clinical, and neuroimaging data, may be analyzed using ML algorithms to find patterns and associations that would not be visible using more conventional techniques. By taking use of these features, machine learning models can enhance the precision of diagnoses, forecast the course of diseases, and identify those at high risk before symptoms appear.

A. *Supervised Learning Approaches*

In supervised learning, a model is trained using labeled data with known outcomes, such as the presence or absence of AD. The several supervised learning techniques for AD detection are covered in this section, along with relevant literature.

a. *Support Vector Machines (SVM)*

Because Support Vector Machines (SVM) can handle high-dimensional data, like neuroimaging, they are commonly employed in AD detection. Klöppel et al. (2008) found that 89% of AD patients and healthy controls could be accurately classified using support vector machines (SVM) based on structural MRI data. Davatzikos et al. [3] further showed the model's potential for early detection by using SVM to distinguish between AD and moderate cognitive impairment (MCI).

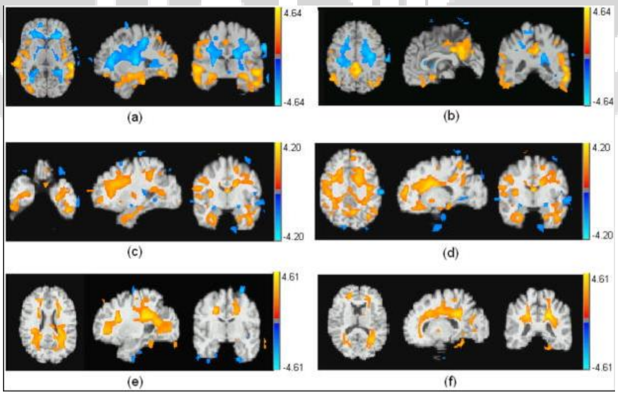

Fig. 2. Alzheimer Disease Detection [3]

The t-statistic maps in Figure 2 illustrate the distinctions between MCI-C and MCI-NC. Figures (a) and (b) illustrate regions of considerably greater periventricular white matter (WM) tissue that appears gray in T1 imaging in MCI-C relative to MCI-NC (blue), possibly because to leukoaraiosis. GM is much higher in MCI-NC compared to MCI-C (red/yellow). (c) and (d) display areas of comparatively lower white matter (WM) in MCI-C as compared to MCI-NC (red/yellow). There is clear evidence of diminished WM in the temporal, prefrontal, and orbitofrontal regions. Leukoaraiosis-related periventricular loss is also apparent, and white matter is seen around the precuneous. The "beta" maps (e and f) illustrate how the rates of GM change over time differ between MCI-C and MCI-NC. Red/yellow indicates a comparatively faster rate of gray-looking tissue accumulation in MCI-C, most likely as a result of leukoaraiosis development [3].

b. *Random Forests (RF)*

Multiple decision trees are combined using Random Forests (RF), an ensemble learning technique, to increase classification accuracy for AD detection. In a research by Duchesne et al. [4], RF was used to classify AD in MRI data, and while the accuracy was similar to SVM, the characteristics were easier to understand. Another study by Lebedev et al. [5] demonstrated the efficiency of RF in managing complicated datasets by using it to evaluate multimodal data, such as genetic and neuroimaging data.

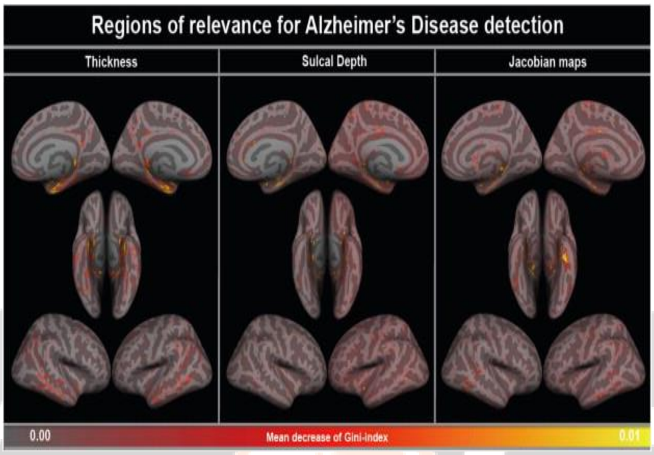

Fig. 3. Cortical pattern of relevance for Alzheimer's disease detection [5]

c. *Neural Networks (NN)*

Because neural networks can represent complicated relationships in data, especially deep learning models, they have become more and more popular in AD diagnosis. Convolutional neural networks (CNNs) and stacked autoencoders are two components of a deep learning model that Suk et al. [6] suggested to evaluate MRI and PET data and achieve excellent classification accuracy. Similar to this, Payan and Montana [7] showed the model's higher performance over conventional approaches by using a 3D CNN for AD identification from MRI images.

Fig. 4. Examples of convolutions with the fourth basis of the 3D sparse autoencoder (32nd slice). [7]

B. *Unsupervised Learning Approaches*

Training a model using unlabeled data entails unsupervised learning. The unsupervised learning methods for AD detection are discussed in this part along with relevant literature.

a. *Clustering*

Based on similarities in clinical and imaging data, clustering methods like k-means and hierarchical clustering have been used to identify subgroups of AD patients. Using clustering methods, a research by Vemuri et al. [8] grouped patients according to MRI characteristics and identified discrete subtypes of AD that corresponded with various cognitive profiles. In a different research, Zhang et al. [9] identified gene expression patterns linked to AD by using clustering to examine genomic data.

b. *Dimensionality Reduction*

When dealing with high-dimensional datasets like genetic or neuroimaging data, dimensionality reduction techniques like Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and t-Distributed Stochastic Neighbor Embedding (t-SNE) are used to minimize the complexity. Prior to classification, Jie et al. [10] used PCA to decrease the dimensionality of MRI data, which increased the efficacy and precision of the ensuing ML models. Liu et al. [11] used t-SNE in another study to visualize high-dimensional genomic data and help identify patterns linked to AD.

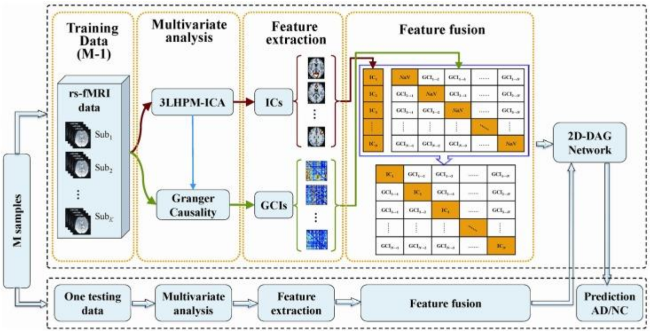

Fig. 5. The framework of the proposed deep learning classification algorithm based on 3LHPM-ICA and Granger causality (GC). [11]

C. *Deep Learning Approaches*

Deep learning is a branch of machine learning that models difficult data using multi-layered neural networks. This section covers relevant papers and deep learning methods for AD detection.

a. *Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN)*

CNNs are very good at processing imaging data because they can automatically learn the spatial hierarchies of characteristics, including MRI and PET scans. By employing MRI data, Liu et al. [11] work created a deep CNN model for AD classification that achieved cutting-edge performance in separating AD from healthy controls. Hosseini-Asl et al. [12] demonstrated the potential of deep learning in limited datasets in another work where they used transfer learning with a pre-trained CNN to improve the detection accuracy.

B. *Recurrent Neural Networks (RNN)*

RNNs are perfect for examining longitudinal data in AD research since they are well-suited for assessing sequential data. An RNN was utilized in a study by Lipton et al. [13] to forecast the course of AD based on longitudinal clinical data, indicating the model's capacity to identify temporal relationships in the data. In a different study, Eshaghi et al. [14] used an RNN to simulate the course of the AD illness and provide light on the dynamics of cognitive decline.

C. *Autoencoders*

An unsupervised deep learning model called an autoencoder has been applied to AD detection in order to reduce dimensionality and extract features. In order to improve the accuracy of AD classification, Suk and Shen [15] created a stacked autoencoder model for feature learning from multimodal data. A sparse autoencoder was employed in a different study by Gupta et al. [16] to pinpoint significant PET scan characteristics, improving the model's interpretability.

D. *Applications in Neuroimaging*

The diagnosis of AD frequently makes use of neuroimaging methods including Positron Emission Tomography (PET) and Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI). The use of machine learning to neuroimaging data for AD detection is covered in this section, along with relevant literature.

a. *MRI-based Detection*

MRI offers fine-grained structural pictures of the brain that can be utilized to spot AD-related atrophy patterns. High diagnosis accuracy was achieved by Misra et al. [17] when they classified AD patients using SVM based on characteristics extracted from MRIs. Another study by Eskildsen et al. [18] showed the promise of MRI-based methods by predicting AD conversion in patients with MCI using voxel-based morphometry in conjunction with ML models.

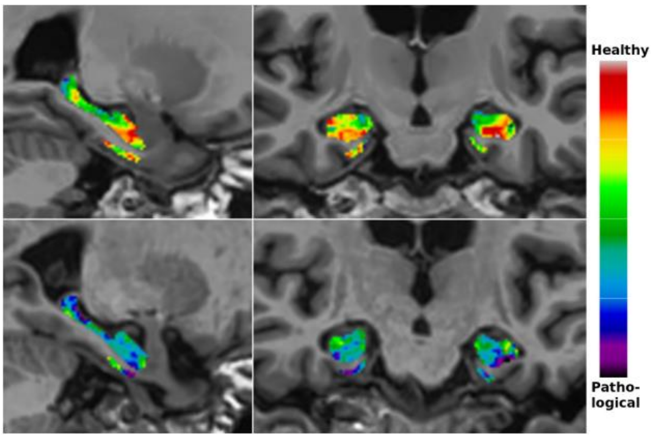

Fig. 6. . Scoring by Nonlocal Image Patch Estimator grading of a stable mild cognitive impaired subject (top row) and a progressive mild cognitive impaired subject (bottom row). [18]

b. *PET-based Detection*

By spotting radiotracers, PET imaging detects brain activity and can be used to identify amyloid plaques, a defining feature of Alzheimer's disease. In order to evaluate PET scans, Gray et al. [19] study used machine learning algorithms, which produced great sensitivity in identifying AD in its early stages. Benzinger et al. [20] improved the accuracy of AD diagnosis in another study by combining PET and MRI data using machine learning algorithms.

E. *Applications in Genetic Data*

The likelihood of getting AD is significantly influenced by genetic factors. This section examines relevant research and machine learning analysis of genetic data for AD diagnosis.

a. *Genome-Wide Association Studies (GWAS)*

Using GWAS data, machine learning has been used to find genetic variations linked to AD. Using ML approaches to evaluate GWAS data, Zhang et al. [21] identified numerous unique genetic loci related with AD. Another study by Lunnon et al. [22] used machine learning (ML) to combine epigenetic data and GWAS data, providing fresh insights into the pathophysiology of AD.

b. *Polygenic Risk Scores (PRS)*

To determine a person's genetic susceptibility to AD, Polygenic Risk Scores combine the effects of many genetic variations. By adding new data sources, such environmental parameters, to PRS, ML models were employed in the work by Escott-Price et al. [23] to improve PRS and produce more accurate risk predictions. Kunkle et al. [24] improved PRS for AD using machine learning, which increased the predictive capacity of the model.

A machine learning approach that incorporates MRI data is proposed by Moradi, E. et al. [25] for the early prediction of the transition from moderate cognitive impairment (MCI) to Alzheimer's disease. To improve prediction accuracy, the system combines feature selection and support vector machines (SVM). DeepAD, a deep learning-based model that uses convolutional neural networks (CNNs) for the categorization of Alzheimer's disease using both MRI and fMRI data, is introduced by Sarraf, S. et al. [26] The study shows how deep learning may be used to improve diagnosis accuracy. A multimodal feature learning method that combines MRI and PET data is presented by Liu, S. et al. [27] to categorize Alzheimer's disease into several phases. The benefits of integrating many imaging modalities for increased classification accuracy are highlighted in the study. The categorization of Alzheimer's disease using regional analysis of FDG-PET imaging data is the main topic of Gray, K. R. et al. [28] work. The study uses machine learning approaches to use patterns of glucose metabolism to differentiate between AD phases. The use of deep learning algorithms in the interpretation of neuroimaging data for a range of neurological and psychiatric illnesses, including Alzheimer's disease, is covered by Vieira, S. et al. [29] The study sheds light on the advantages and difficulties of deep learning for medical picture analysis.

III. Conclusion

Fig. 7. In summary, machine learning has shown to be a revolutionary tool in the identification and treatment of Alzheimer's disease, providing notable improvements over conventional techniques. The capacity of machine learning algorithms to examine intricate and multidimensional data, including genetic data, neuroimaging, and medical records, has enhanced the precision of diagnoses, enabled early identification, and enhanced comprehension of the course of diseases. While deep learning approaches, especially convolutional neural networks, have showed tremendous promise in processing neuroimaging data, supervised learning techniques such as support vector machines and random forests have shown useful in classification tasks. There are still issues, nevertheless, such as the requirement for sizable, excellent datasets, interpretability of the model, and the

incorporation of multimodal data. As research advances, the broad use of these methods in clinical settings will depend heavily on the creation of increasingly reliable, understandable, and integrated machine learning models. In order to guarantee that ML techniques can consistently assist early diagnosis, individualized therapy, and improved outcomes for people with Alzheimer's disease, future study should concentrate on resolving these obstacles. Machine learning has the potential to significantly contribute to reducing the increasing worldwide burden of Alzheimer's disease by further improving these techniques.

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