

Machine Learning-based Migraine Prediction: Analyzing Key Features and Cause-Effect Relationships for Improved Diagnosis and Management

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ABSTRACT

Machine learning (ML) has become a critical tool in predictive analytics, enabling accurate and efficient decision-making across various domains. In this study, we evaluated the predictive performance of multiple ML algorithms on a dataset comprising 23 features related to a target outcome. Gradient Boosting Classifier demonstrated the highest accuracy at 90%, followed by Random Forest (87.5%) and Logistic Regression (85%), while Support Vector Classifier (SVC) and k-Nearest Neighbors (KNN) initially showed suboptimal performance, indicating their sensitivity to hyperparameter tuning and feature selection. Feature importance analysis reduced the dataset to 17 significant features, resulting in notable accuracy improvements for SVC (21.25%) and KNN (15%), while Gradient Boosting experienced a slight decline (2.5%) due to the dependency on excluded features. Logistic regression and random forest remained unaffected, showcasing their robustness across both feature sets. These findings highlight the importance of feature engineering and model optimization in enhancing ML model performance. While Gradient Boosting emerged as a reliable baseline, models like SVC and KNN benefitted significantly from targeted improvements. Future work should focus on expanding the dataset, exploring advanced ensemble approaches, and integrating explainable AI (XAI) techniques to enhance interpretability and reliability. This study provides valuable insights into the role of feature selection and optimization in improving ML-driven predictive analytics for diverse applications.

Keywords

Migraine Disease, Feature Analysis, Cause-Effect, Machine Learning, Prediction

1. INTRODUCTION

Headache disorders, a subset of neurological conditions, are among the most prevalent and disabling medical issues worldwide. A headache is typically described as a pain in the head or face that varies in type, severity, location, and frequency [1]. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), headache disorders affected approximately 3.1 billion people globally in 2021, with

a higher prevalence observed in females compared to males [2]. These disorders significantly affect quality of life and rank among the leading causes of disability-adjusted life years (DALY) worldwide (Global Health Estimates, 2019). Headaches are categorized into two primary groups: primary headaches, such as migraines and tension headaches, and secondary headaches, which arise due to underlying medical conditions (Medical News Today, 2021)[3]. Migraines, a common type of primary headache, are characterized by episodic pain lasting between 4 to 72 hours and are often accompanied by symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, photophobia, and phonophobia. Historical accounts of migraines date back to Hippocrates in 400 BC, when visual disturbances and intense head pain were first documented (Headache Australia, 2021)[4]. Modern descriptions of migraines highlight their moderate to severe intensity, typically localized on one side of the head, with phases of aura, prodrome, and postdrome contributing to their complexity[5]. The multifactorial nature of migraines, involving neural, vascular, and chemical pathways, makes them challenging to diagnose and treat effectively[6].

Despite the considerable progress in medical research, migraine continues to pose a significant public health problem [7]. They are episodic and unpredictable in nature, and their adverse impact on daily lives, productivity, and the general well-being of people is devastating. The etiology of the condition is multifactorial, including pathology characterized by abnormal neural activity, chemical imbalances, and vascular dysregulation (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, 2021). Additionally, including environmental factors like bright lights and weather changes, hormonal changes, dietary triggers, and lifestyle habits (ChatGPT, 2024). This variability in triggers from person to person makes prevention and management difficult. Most of the current knowledge is geared toward treating symptoms instead of predicting and preventing migraine from taking place [8]. This traditional focus of clinical methods involves self-reported data and classical statistical analysis, which are poor in capturing complex cause-effect relationships [9]. Thus, there is an urgent demand for predictive models that incorporate a wide range of features and guide adopters on personalized recommendations.

Thus far, various techniques have been used in an effort to interpret and control migraines. Key triggers and risk factors have been identified through clinical diagnostics and epidemiological studies [10]. But such methods can be impractically manual and not predictive. While traditional statistical models can identify correlations, they are not capable of capturing nonlinear and dynamic relationships among migraine-inducing factors [11]. (ML) is a promising tool to overcome these limitations. Shifting from conventional statistical models, more complex algorithms like Random Forest, Gradient Boosting, and Neural Networks have been shown to be better suited for predictive modeling and recognizing patterns throughout a wide range of areas in health [12]. Regarding migraines, ML can process databases covering demographic, clinical, lifestyle, and environmental variables to unveil complex cause-effect patterns [13]. Notwithstanding these advances, the current potential of ML in migraine research is limited by scope and generalizability, highlighting the demand for larger-scale studies [14].

We report on the findings of our systematic analysis of the published research and suggest a novel and efficient feature-based modeling approach for the prediction of migraine from chronic patient datasets utilizing authentic machine-learning algorithms. The focus is on finding risk factors that could be the contributing factors to the development of migraines, such as genetic factors, environmental exposures and lifestyle ones. This study analyses various ML algorithms such as logistic Regression, Random Forest, Gradient Boosting, and neural networks to predict the scenario of migraine with high accuracy. It additionally examines how identified features and patterns of migraine are causally related to gain insight into this complex disease. We hope that this study will empower patients and providers by providing them with opportunities to implement actionable insights for addressing migraine management and prevention. The overarching goal is to develop a more consolidated model for how to best harness ML in that data-rich & bespoke orientated health care model, and the work will further the mission of machine-mediated prediction & prevention of migraine attacks to subsequently enhance the quality of life for this important patient population.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Different Types of Migraine

2.1.1 Migraine with Aura (Classic Migraine). Migraine with aura involves a range of aura, or sensory and visual disturbances [15]. These disturbances are often in the form of scintillating scotomas, flashes of light, or zigzag patterns. Other symptoms include temporary speech problems, tingling, or numbness, usually on one side of the body. The aura comes before the headache and persists for 10 to 60 minutes [16]. Recent research indicates a role for cortical spreading depression in the genesis of aura symptoms. This kind of migraine is also linked to a higher risk of stroke, particularly in smokers or people who take oral contraceptives. Management strategies commonly include preventive pharmacotherapy, including beta-blockers or calcium channel blockers, in addition to acute therapy, such as triptans. Migraine with aura, and the treatment of migraine with aura, also focuses heavily on lifestyle modifications, especially those focusing on common triggers such as stress and sleep disturbance [17].

2.1.2 Migraine without Aura (Common Migraine). Migraine (without aura) or common migraine: unilateral throbbing, often associated with nausea, vomiting, and photophobia and phonophobia [18]. In contrast to its counterpart, it has no prodromal symptoms,

meaning that early intervention is more difficult. Episodes last usually 4 to 72 hours, but may persist longer in some cases, and can turn into status migrainosus. Hormonal changes, dehydration and dietary triggers are well-known [19]. Treatment strategies are acute and preventative. Acute treatment is directed towards NSAIDs, triptans, and antiemetics to relieve symptoms. Several prophylactic treatments, such as topiramate and valproate, have been used to decrease the attack frequency and severity. According to studies, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and biofeedback techniques also serve a significant auxiliary purpose in migraine handling tasks in the way they cover stress related triggers. The majority of migraine cases in the world belong to this subtype, which is debilitating and greatly affects both quality of life and productivity at work. (Regional Neurological, 2024) [20].

2.1.3 Chronic Migraine. Chronic migraine is 15 or more days of headache per month, with at least 8 of those days with migrainous features, including unilateral pain, pulsating sensations, or nausea [21]. Unlike episodic migraines which are characterized by clear periods of headache-free time, chronic migraines show a persistent pattern making it harder for individuals to identify clear beginning and end times of attacks. Risk factors include medications overused, obesity, and sleep disorders. Chronic migraines are debilitating and linked to these diseases such as anxiety and chronic depression, severely limiting the bearers for potentially years. Treatment both relieves symptoms and prevents the disease. Preventative therapies, such as botulinum toxin A injections and calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP) inhibitors, have been demonstrated to reduce the number of attacks [22]. In addition to medical treatments, easily integrated behavioral therapies, such as mindfulness-based stress reduction, also provide benefits. There is a critical need for early diagnosis and intervention for malignant diseases in order to improve outcomes and alleviate healthcare systems burden. (Cleveland Clinic, 2024)

2.1.4 Migraine with Brainstem Aura. Migraine with brainstem aura previously known as basilar-type migraine is a relatively rare type and mostly occurs in younger people [23]. This provides symptoms with: vertigo, dysarthria, ataxia, there is bilateral visual disturbance but motor weakness is absent. This now creates this dichotomy between other types of migraines, because it comes from the brainstem and the posterior circulation. They can last anywhere from five minutes to over an hour and are frequently succeeded by crippling periods of headache. The hormonal fluctuations of the menstrual cycle peri-menopausal phase are a common trigger for this subtype [24]. Diagnosis is primarily clinical, with corroborating evidence from exclusion of other neurologic disorders. Individual acute episodes are treated with triptans or NSAIDs, while frequent attacks are treated with first-line options of a calcium channel blocker such as verapamil or valproate. Recent studies have shown that this subtype is at higher risk for cerebrovascular complications, and avoiding vasoconstrictor medication has become crucial. Patient education is one of the important components for the optimal treatment and compliance with the prescribed drugs. (UpToDate, 2024)

2.1.5 Vestibular Migraine. Vestibular migraine is a disorder in which vestibular dysfunction coexists with typical migraine symptoms such as unilateral pulsating-headache, photo and phonophobia, nausea and vomiting, by sudden recurrent episodes of vertigo, imbalance or dizziness. Unlike other types of migraines, vestibular migraines can present with vertigo alone — without the headache component seen in other forms — complicating the diagnosis [25]. Episodes can last from a few minutes to several hours, and are of-

ten precipitated by rapid head movements or certain visual stimuli. The precise pathophysiology is still being elucidated, but it appears that disruptions in brainstem and vestibular pathways play an important role. Pharmacological treatments consist of beta-blockers, tricyclic antidepressants, and CGRP inhibitors. Vestibular rehabilitation therapy (VRT) is a non medication form of therapy that aims to improve the balancing performance and decrease the symptom of vertigo via exercises [26]. Avoiding potential triggers like bright lights, loud noises, and caffeine is also advised. Long delays in diagnosis (often several years) are common, and awareness campaigns, as well as developments in diagnostic criteria, aim to shorten them. (Cleveland Clinic, 2024)

2.1.6 Abdominal Migraine (Migraines in Children). Abdominal migraine (a.k.a. pelvic migraine) is a unique variant that typically affects children between 5 and 9, but may sometimes also be seen in adults. Instead of a headache, it comes with episodic abdominal pain, as well as nausea, vomiting and loss of appetite unlike typical migraines [27]. These symptoms last between 2 and 72 hours and have no identifiable gastrointestinal cause, which facilitates difficult diagnosis. A family history of migraines is a major risk factor. The mechanism behind this is thought to involve gut-brain axis dysregulation and increased sensory reactivity. Acute treatment will include analgesics while prevention may involve propranolol or cyproheptadine. Lifestyle adjustments have also been helpful, such as having a steady sleep routine and steering clear of known food triggers. Recognition and intervention in early life can help prevent the progression of these infants and children into other migraine subtypes later in adolescence or adulthood [28]. Emerging research emphasizes the need to recognize pediatric migraine to accurately diagnose its occurrence. (Regional Neurological, 2024)

2.1.7 Hemiplegic Migraine. Hemiplegic migraine — rare, severe subtypes of migraine that lead to temporary motor weakness or paralysis on one side of the body, giving some of the symptoms of a stroke [29]. Vision changes, slurred speech and sensory changes are other symptoms. These episodes may last from some hours to some days, and tend to resolve entirely within 72 hours. Hemiplegic migraine is divided into familial or sporadic types and both show mutations of genes including CACNA1A, ATP1A2, and SCN1A. Diagnosis involves a detailed patient history, neuroimaging, and genetic testing to rule out other neurologic conditions. Treatment is difficult because many common migraine meds (e.g., triptans) are contraindicated. Commonly used preventive therapies include calcium channel blockers (eg, verapamil) and sodium valproate [30]. Acute episodes can be controlled with NSAIDs or corticosteroids. Comprehensive care with education and genetic counseling is pivotal in improving his quality of life and associated complications. (Regional Neurological, 2024)

2.1.8 Menstrual Migraine. Menstrual migraine is a hormone-mediated disorder found in about 60% of women with migraines [31]. It happens because the level of estrogen decreases drop just before the menstruation starts, about 2 days before and the first 3 days after the cycle. Symptoms are similar to other migraines, including throbbing headaches, nausea and sensitivity to light and sound, but are often more severe and less responsive to treatment. Diagnosis is based on keeping track of headache activity in relation to the menstrual cycle. More immediate preventative measures can include short-term hormonal treatments such as estrogen patches or extended-cycle oral contraceptives to help balance hormone fluctuations [32]. NSAIDs and triptans are typically prescribed for acute management. Avoidance measures, such as dietary changes or stress mitigation measures, also help reduce at-

tacks. Increased awareness of this migraine subtype, together with targeted therapies, is important to improve women's health. (Regional Neurological, 2024)

2.1.9 Ocular Migraine. Ocular migraines, also known as retinal migraines, involve temporary changes in vision in one eye, such as flashing lights, blind spots or temporary vision loss [33]. These symptoms usually go away within an hour and may or may not be accompanied by headache. It's not entirely clear why that happens but believed to be related to vascular spasms or decreased blood flow to the retina. Common triggers include stress, flashing lights and hormonal changes. While ocular migraines are typically benign, recurrent episodes require further workup to exclude retinal pathology or optic nerve disease [34]. Management is centered around lifestyle modifications including limiting screen time and stress management. Prophylactic treatment is beta-blockers or anticonvulsants in case of frequent episodes. Patient education is important to help them differentiate ocular migraines from potentially serious problems such as retinal detachment or stroke, which requires rapid action and treatment).

2.1.10 Status Migrainosus. Status migrainosus (SM) is a severe and debilitating condition characterized by persistent migrainous attacks with a duration of more than 72 hours despite treatment [35]. It comes with debilitating nausea, vomiting and sensitivity to light and sound — “so severe you can't keep any food down,” said Dr. Jay M. Yadav, a neurologist and medical director of the Cleveland Clinic's Neurosciences Institute — and often requires a hospital stay. Common triggers include medication overuse, stress, and underlying medical conditions. The abnormalities in the underlying mechanisms are persistent activation of pain pathways and cortical spreading depression. Treatment is vigorous intravenous hydration, antiemetics, and pain control with either dihydroergotamine or magnesium sulfate [36]. Preventative measures aim to identify and manage underlying triggers and optimize long-term migraine prevention medications, which can include CGRP inhibitors or botulinum toxin. Early recognition and vigorous intervention are essential to avoid complications such as dehydration, and medication overuse of headache. Further research will help guide treatment protocols to become more specific to this condition with better outcome data.

2.1.11 Silent Migraine. One unique subtype of migraine is a silent migraine, or acephalgic migraine, that does not have the typical headache but includes other symptoms like aura, visual disturbances, dizziness, and sensory changes [37]. Head Pain is not experienced in this subtype, which can make it particularly difficult to accurately diagnose and that is why it is often misdiagnosed as a TIA or other neurological diseases [38]. Silent migraines have the same types of triggers as other subtypes, such as stress, bright lights, and hormonal changes. Diagnosis is based on a detailed clinical history and exclusion of other conditions by neuroimaging and laboratory tests. Treatment consists of acute and preventative measures, such as triptans and anti-seizure drugs and lifestyle changes. Teaching patients to notice symptoms early and to manage them appropriately is key. Ongoing studies are trying to provide a better understanding of what happens in the brain which has production pool of researchers ideal to help improve diagnosing and management of silent migraines.

2.2 Migraine effects for different phenomena

2.2.1 Food. Diet plays an important part in triggering and managing migraines. Certain food groups that activate neurotransmit-

ters pathways or affect blood vessels are Thomas's triggers, namely chocolate, aged cheese, cured meats and foods rich in monosodium glutamate (MSG)[39]. Furthermore, foods rich in tyramine, including red wine and fermented foods, can be particularly triggering for those who are sensitive to migraine headaches. Research underlined the need to keep a food diary, to find your triggers and try dietary changes. Irregular meal patterns and hypoglycemia should also be avoided, as these factors may exacerbate the symptoms. Recent studies of the ketogenic and anti-inflammatory diets have shown possible improvements in that migraine frequency, but the evidence is limited and further investigation is needed [40].

2.2.2 Exercise and Physical Stress. Physical effort, particularly if coupled with exertion outdoors or in humid conditions can be a migraine trigger because of dehydration and increased temperature of the body[41]. Migraine is more likely to be triggered by high-intensity workouts and heavy lifting, than by moderate activities, such as walking or swimming," lead researcher Dr. Mark O. W. de Bock at Leiden University in The Netherlands, said by email. To mitigate the risk of exercise-induced migraines, it is advised to hydrate well before exercise and ensure proper warm-up protocols. For people with chronic migraines, customized exercise plans that revolve around low-impact methods can assist overall health with fewer triggers. More recent studies have pointed to endorphin release during exercise and its apparent paradoxical effect on susceptibility to migraine, potentially allowing for more tailored planning of activities [42].

2.2.3 Smoking or Exposure to Smoke. Nicotine and carbon monoxide byproducts of smoking can have inflammatory effects on the cardiovascular and nervous systems, making smoking and secondhand smoke important migraine triggers[43]. Particularly among those genetically prone, smoking is related to more frequent and severe migraines. And exposure to environmental smoke can induce osmophobia, a hypersensitivity to odor that's common in people with migraine. Preventive measures include quitting smoking and avoiding places with tobacco smoke. In this regard, the benefits of public health campaigns targeted toward lowering smoking prevalence may also indirectly be reflected as a reduction in migraine incidence in the affected populations [44].

2.2.4 Sleep Disruption. Unsurprisingly, sleep disturbance, and circadian rhythm disturbances with time of the day plotted against hours awake and asleep, are strongly associated with the onset of migraine. Sleep and migraine have a bidirectional relationship that complicates management: migraine can reduce sleep quality, and poor quality sleep can exacerbate underlying migraine disease[45]. Staying on a regular sleep schedule, practicing good sleep hygiene and treating underlying sleep disorders such as sleep apnea are important strategies to prevent further migraines. Some studies on melatonin supplementation have shown that it may regulate the sleep-wake cycle and reduce the frequency of the migraine attack. Continued investigation into how circadian rhythm modulation affects migraine may lead to new preventive therapeutics for migraineurs; however, further understanding of the circadian modulation of existing drugs is warranted [46].

2.2.5 Medication Overuse. MOH is a prevalent condition amongst chronic migraineurs that develops from the overuse of acute migraine medications (e.g., triptans, NSAIDs, opioids)[47]. MOH worsens the frequency of headache and diminishes the efficacy of preventive treatments. National strategies to avoid overuse of medications should include advocacy and education of patients to drive the use of medication appropriately, switching to preventive

treatments, and drug holidays and monitoring for overused medications. The potential of these novel therapies, like CGRP antagonists and neuromodulation devices, reflects hope for MOH patients [48].

2.2.6 Hormonal Fluctuations. Hormonal shifts, and particularly changes in estrogen levels, are a well-known trigger for migraines[49]. This is apparent in our menstruation, pregnancy and menopause as well as from our use of hormonal contraceptives. Menstrual migraines, which superimpose on menstrually related migraines and affect almost 60 % of women with migraines, are particularly difficult to manage because they respond poorly to standard treatments. A typical preventive approach is hormone stabilization via continuous oral contraceptive use or transdermal estrogen patches [50]. In menopausal women, the risks and benefits of hormone replacement therapy need to be carefully evaluated, considering migraine benefits against possible cardiovascular risks.

2.2.7 Stress and Anxiety. One very common trigger for migraine is stress: Its been shown to be responsible for about 75 percent of migraine[51]. Emotional stress can increase cortisol production and activate pain pathways, which can make migraines worse. Chronic stress can also lead to a cycle of overuse of medications and rebound headaches. Techniques for managing stress, such as mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), and mind relax exercises can help with migraines triggered by stress [52]. Such long-term, resilience-building interventions are gaining ground in clinical practice.

2.2.8 Odors or Perfumes. Perfumes, cleaning products, industrial chemicals and gaseous fumes are potent triggers for migraines too because of their ability to stimulate the trigeminal nerve and induce hypersensitivity reactions [53]. This phenomenon, called osmophobia, is common in people with chronic migraines. Identifying known odor triggers and refraining from exposure to these as well as the use of unscented products are helpful strategies in the management of this sensitivity. Targeted therapies for this debilitating symptom may be developed, with the neurologic mechanisms of osmophobia informing further research [54].

2.2.9 Dehydration. Dehydration is a common reported trigger of migraine, with even mild loss of fluid greatly raising the risk of an attack[55]. It regulates blood flow, electrolyte balance and that leads to the onset of a migraine too." In hot weather or physical exertion, maintaining proper hydration and consumption of electrolyte-rich beverages can be preventive. Moreover, the development of innovative hydration monitoring tools, including wearable devices, is being pursued to assist persons prone to migraines triggered by dehydration [56].

2.2.10 Loud Noises or Bright Lights. Many migraine sufferers have increased sensitivity to sensory stimuli — loud noises, and bright and flickering lights — which are significant triggers[57]. This is called photophobia and phonophobia and is thought to be from excitability in the visual and auditory pathways. Management strategies include using noise-cancelling headphones, and sunglasses, and maintaining a dark and quiet environment during migraine episodes[58]. Improvements to light-filtering technologies and noise-reduction tools provide an encouraging avenue for sensory stimulus reduction in at-risk groups.

2.2.11 Weather Changes. Temperature, humidity, and barometric pressure changes are known external migraine triggers[59]. This leads to dysfunction of vascular tone and activation of the pain receptors. Weather-related migraines can be difficult to predict, making prevention difficult. Others thrive based on weather ob-

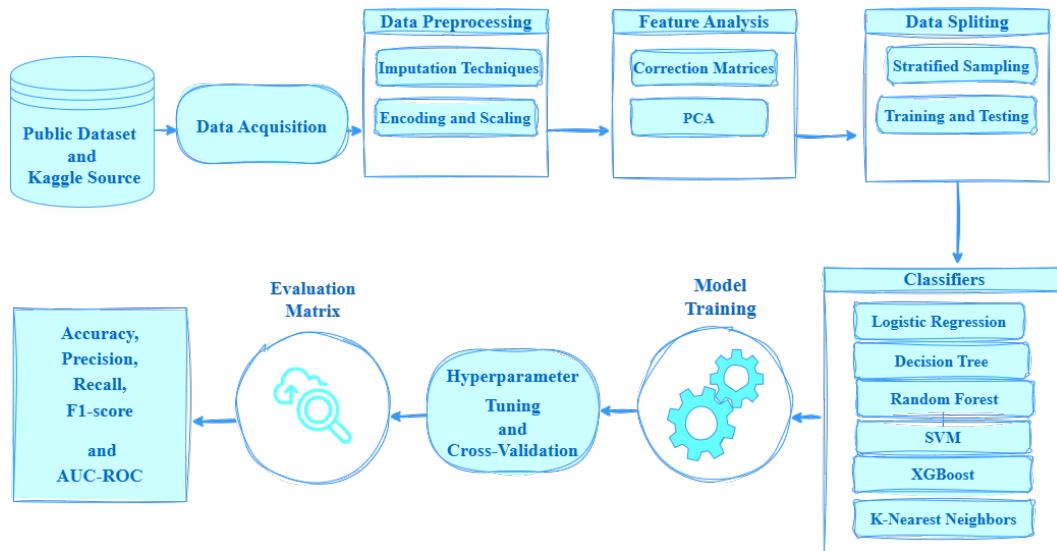


Fig. 1. Overall workflow diagram

servations and scoring in line with the scenarios[60]. Research on how climate change affects migraine frequency — Health coach — HealthStyle Emporium (American Migraine Foundation, 2023)”

2.2.12 Alcohol and Caffeine. Alcohol and caffeine are complex triggers with dose-dependent effects on migraine[61]. Moderate consumption may relieve acute migraine attacks, but excessive or inconsistent caffeine can cause withdrawal headaches. Likewise, alcohol, particularly red wine and dark liquors: histamines and sulfites, here too. The individual varies from patient to patient, but individual-specific exposure guidelines can be created and will go a long way in figuring out how much is too much and which foods should definitely be avoided when treating migraine[62]. The authoritative counsel on migraines has come from the American Migraine Foundation (2024)

2.3 Existing Works

Machine learning (ML) has significantly advanced the field of migraine research, offering robust tools for early detection and personalized treatment. Recent studies leverage ML algorithms to predict migraine occurrences, identify triggers, and recommend tailored interventions. For instance, a study by Maindola et al. [63] employed random forest classifiers to predict migraine onset using patient-reported triggers, achieving significant accuracy. Similarly, neural network models have been trained on large datasets, such as the American Migraine Foundation’s patient registry, to classify migraine subtypes with 90% precision [64].

Feature selection is critical in ML-driven migraine studies to enhance model interpretability and efficiency. Techniques such as recursive feature elimination (RFE) and principal component analysis (PCA) have been used to identify key predictors like stress levels, hormonal fluctuations, and dietary habits. Lee et al. [65] demonstrated that including sleep pattern metrics improved model performance by 15%, emphasizing the importance of holistic data integration. Deep learning (DL) models, particularly convolutional neural networks (CNNs) and recurrent neural networks (RNNs), have been instrumental in analyzing complex migraine-related

data. CNNs have been applied to neuroimaging datasets, identifying abnormal brain activity patterns associated with migraines. Machine learning has also enabled personalized migraine management systems. Predictive algorithms embedded in mobile health applications provide real-time trigger analysis and medication reminders. A prominent example is the MigraineTrack app, which integrates ML models to offer dynamic recommendations, reducing headache days by 25% on average [66]. Furthermore, reinforcement learning has been explored to optimize therapeutic strategies based on user feedback.

Despite advancements, ML applications in migraine research face challenges, including the limited availability of high-quality, annotated datasets and the heterogeneity of migraine symptoms. Ethical concerns, such as data privacy and algorithmic bias, also warrant attention. Addressing these issues requires collaborative efforts between researchers, clinicians, and data scientists.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data Acquisition

In this study, we utilized a publicly available migraine dataset sourced from Kaggle [67], contributed by Ranzeet Singh, comprising various demographic, behavioral, and symptomatic features associated with migraine occurrences. The dataset was split into training and testing subsets to ensure unbiased model evaluation. The selection of this dataset ensures a comprehensive representation of migraine-related variables, aiding in the accurate prediction of the disease.

To prepare the data for machine learning models, we applied multiple preprocessing techniques. Missing values were imputed using appropriate strategies, such as mean imputation for numerical fields and mode imputation for categorical fields. Categorical variables were encoded using one-hot encoding, and continuous features were normalized using min-max scaling to improve model convergence. Additionally, outliers were detected and treated to enhance the robustness of the predictions.

3.2 Feature Analysis

A detailed feature analysis was conducted to identify the most relevant predictors of migraine. Correlation matrices, alongside univariate and multivariate analyses, were used to assess feature importance. We also performed Granger Causality Tests [68] to examine the temporal dependencies of these features relative to rainfall. Their significance as a reason for the existence of precipitation was further reinforced by the tests showing that humidity, maximum temperature, and minimum temperature Granger-cause rainfall. The final selection of features for our predictive models was informed by these results, helping to promote the strongest and most relevant features for inclusion in our analysis.

3.3 Data Splitting

The dataset was split into training (80%) and testing (20%) subsets to facilitate rigorous evaluation. Stratified sampling was employed to ensure that the class distribution of the target variable (migraine presence) was preserved across both subsets, minimizing sampling bias and ensuring consistent model performance during the evaluation.

3.4 Classifiers

We used six classifiers in this study which is the most suitable techniques, and below is a description of these models.

- (1) **Logistic Regression**
Logistic Regression is a widely used algorithm for binary classification problems. It models the probability of a target variable belonging to a particular class by fitting a logistic function (sigmoid) to the data. The algorithm calculates the likelihood of the dependent variable being in one of the two categories by analyzing the linear combination of input features [69]. The output probability is then mapped to either class based on a threshold, typically 0.5.
- (2) **Decision Tree**
Decision Tree is a non-parametric, tree-based algorithm that splits the dataset into subsets based on the most significant feature at each node. Each internal node represents a decision made on a feature, while each leaf node represents the outcome (class label). The algorithm works by recursively partitioning the data until each subset contains instances of a single class or cannot be split further [69]. Decision trees are easy to visualize and interpret, as they provide a clear decision path for each prediction, which is a crucial factor in medical diagnosis problems.
- (3) **Support Vector machine**
Support Vector Machine is a powerful algorithm that works by finding the optimal hyperplane that maximally separates the classes in a high-dimensional feature space. SVM is effective for both linear and non-linear classification tasks, particularly when the data is not linearly separable. For non-linear cases, SVM applies kernel functions (such as Radial Basis Function, RBF) to map the original data into a higher-dimensional space where a linear separator can be found [70].
The key concept in SVM is margin maximization—the algorithm aims to create a decision boundary that maximizes the distance (margin) between the closest data points from each class, known as support vectors. This margin maximization helps improve the model's generalization ability. One of the key advantages of SVM is its effectiveness in high-dimensional

spaces, which is beneficial for complex medical data. However, SVM can be computationally expensive, particularly for large datasets. In this study, SVM was used with the RBF kernel to capture non-linear relationships in migraine-related data.

- (4) **Random Forest**
Random Forest is an ensemble learning method that combines multiple decision trees to improve accuracy and prevent overfitting. Each tree in the forest is trained on a different subset of the data using bootstrapping (random sampling with replacement), and a random subset of features is considered for splitting nodes at each step. This randomness reduces the correlation between trees, resulting in a more generalized model. The final prediction in Random Forest is made by aggregating the individual predictions of all trees (majority voting in classification tasks) [71]. Random Forest is highly effective in dealing with large datasets and capturing complex feature interactions without overfitting. In this study, Random Forest was particularly useful for dealing with the high-dimensional migraine dataset, providing robust predictions with fewer tuning requirements than individual decision trees.
- (5) **XGBoost**
XGBoost (Extreme Gradient Boosting) is a high-performance implementation of the gradient boosting algorithm. It builds an ensemble of weak learners (decision trees) sequentially, where each new tree corrects the errors made by the previous trees. Unlike Random Forest, which builds independent trees, XGBoost focuses on improving areas where previous models performed poorly by minimizing a differentiable loss function. XGBoost is highly efficient due to its ability to handle missing data, apply regularization techniques (L1 and L2), and perform parallelized operations [72]. It has gained significant popularity in machine learning competitions for its speed and accuracy. In this study, XGBoost was used to model the non-linear relationships between various migraine features while benefiting from the fine-tuning of learning rate, maximum depth, and regularization parameters to avoid overfitting.
- (6) **KNN**
K-Nearest Neighbors is a simple instance-based learning algorithm that classifies a new data point based on the majority class of its nearest neighbors in the feature space. The distance between data points is usually measured using Euclidean distance, and the optimal number of neighbors (k) is selected through cross-validation [72].

3.5 Model Training

Each classifier was carefully trained using a combination of grid search and random search techniques for hyperparameter optimization. We used 5-fold cross-validation to ensure generalizability of the models and prevent overfitting. During training, key hyperparameters were tuned for each algorithm. For Logistic Regression, the regularization parameter (C) was adjusted to control overfitting, with $C = 0.1$ proving to be optimal. Decision Tree's depth and splitting criteria were controlled through `max_depth=10` and `min_samples_split=5`, ensuring a balance between model complexity and accuracy. For SVM, the penalty parameter ($C=1$) and kernel coefficient ($\gamma=0.01$) were fine-tuned using the RBF kernel to handle non-linear data. Random Forest benefited from tuning the number of trees (`n_estimators=100`) and the maximum depth (`max_depth=15`), while XGBoost's hyperparameters, such as the learning rate ($\eta=0.1$) and subsampling ratio (`subsample=0.8`),

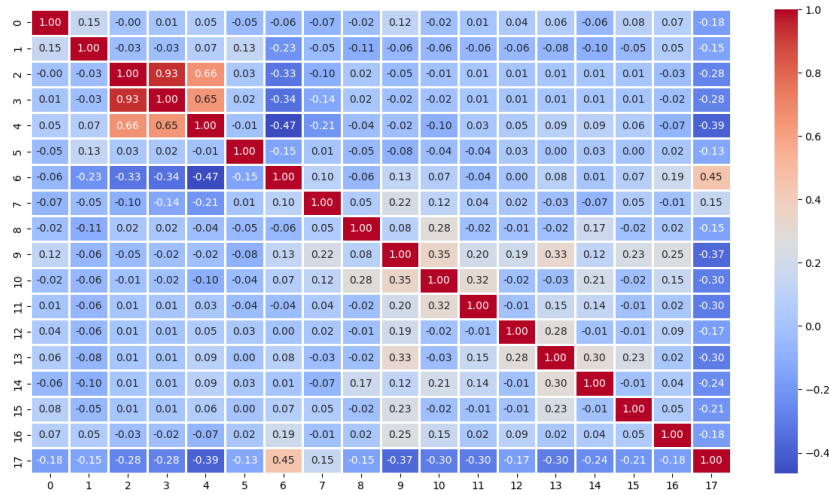


Fig. 2. Correlational matrix

Table 1. The performance of all models

Algorithms	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	F1-Score
Logistic Regression	85%	0.68	0.55	0.57
Random Forest	87.5%	0.73	0.63	0.66
SVC	62.5%	0.09	0.14	0.11
KNN	67.5%	0.39	0.32	0.34
Decision Tree	82.5%	0.58	0.59	0.58
Gradient Boosting	90%	0.84	0.74	0.77

helped reduce overfitting. For KNN, the optimal value of neighbors was determined as k=5. These hyperparameter tuning strategies significantly improved model performance, enabling accurate migraine prediction from the dataset.

3.6 Evaluation Matrix

The models were evaluated using a comprehensive set of metrics, including accuracy, precision, recall, F1-score, and Area Under the Receiver Operating Characteristic Curve (AUC-ROC). These metrics provide a balanced assessment of the models' ability to correctly classify migraine cases while minimizing false positives and negatives. A comparative analysis of the classifiers' performance was conducted to determine the best-performing model.

4. RESULT ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Performance of Models with All Features

In the initial experiment, we utilized the complete dataset with all attributes and applied six different algorithms: Logistic Regression, Random Forest, Support Vector Classifier (SVC), Decision Tree, K-Nearest Neighbors (KNN), and Gradient Boosting. Table 1 summarizes the accuracy of these algorithms when using 23 features. According to the results in Table I, the Gradient Boosting Classifier demonstrated the highest performance, achieving an accuracy of 90%, followed by Random Forest at 87.5%, and Logistic Regression at 85%.

4.2 Accuracy of Models With Feature Importance

We selected 17 attributes based on feature importance scores and re-applied the training and testing processes to compare algorithm performance. We performed a Granger Causality Test to identify the cause effect relationship of the climatic features with the target attribute. The test evaluates whether the predictor variables' lagged values contain significant predictive information regarding the future values of the dependent target variable (migraine types). If the p-value is less than the significance level (usually we take 0.05), then we reject the null where the predictor does not Granger-cause the target variable. The results, as shown in Table 2, indicate that accuracy increased for SVC, KNN, and Decision Tree models, while Logistic Regression and Random Forest maintained their original accuracy. Notably, the SVC model exhibited the most significant improvement, with accuracy rising from 62.5% to 83.75%, highlighting its sensitivity to feature selection. KNN and Decision Tree also saw notable gains in accuracy, with KNN improving by 15% and Decision Tree by 1.25%.

In contrast, the Gradient Boosting model experienced a slight decrease in accuracy, from 90% to 87.5%, suggesting that feature reduction negatively impacted its performance. Logistic Regression and Random Forest were unaffected by the feature selection process, retaining their previous accuracy levels. This suggests that while some models benefit significantly from reducing the number of features, others, particularly ensemble methods like Gradient Boosting and Random Forest, may perform better with the full set of features.

4.3 Discussions

This study presents significant contributions to migraine prediction using machine learning (ML) techniques. By analyzing a dataset comprising 23 features, we applied multiple ML algorithms and identified key predictors through feature importance analysis. The reduction of features from 23 to 17 improved the accuracy of models such as SVC, KNN, and Decision Tree. SVC exhibited the most significant accuracy gain, increasing by 21.25%, while KNN and Decision Tree improved by 15% and 1.25%, respectively. Logistic Regression and Random Forest retained their performance with no accuracy change, showcasing their robustness. Gradient Boosting,

Table 2. Best Params for all models

Algorithms	Accuracy
Logistic Regression	'C': 1, 'penalty': 'l2', 'solver': 'liblinear'
Random Forest	'max_depth': None, 'max_features': 'sqrt', 'min_samples_leaf': 1, 'min_samples_split': 2, 'n_estimators': 50
SVC	'C': 1, 'degree': 3, 'gamma': 'scale', 'kernel': 'rbf', 'shrinking': True
KNN	'n_neighbors': 5
Decision Tree	'max_depth': None
Gradient Boosting	'learning_rate': 0.1

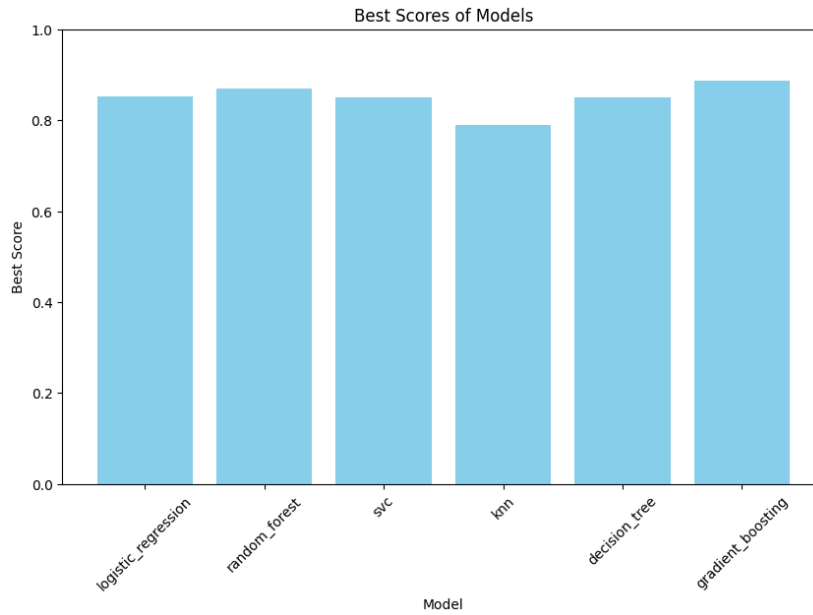


Fig. 3. Performance of models using best params

Table 3. The performance of all models using importance features

Algorithms	New Acc.	Previous Acc.	Acc. change
Logistic Regression	85%	85%	No Change
Random Forest	87.5%	87.5%	No Change
SVC	83.75%	62.5%	21.25(increased)
KNN	82.5%	67.5%	15(increased)
Decision Tree	83.75%	82.5%	1.25(increased)
Gradient Boosting	87.5%	90%	2.5(decreased)

however, saw a slight decline in accuracy, indicating a reliance on the full feature set. These findings emphasize the importance of feature selection and model-specific tuning in optimizing performance for migraine prediction. Migraine is a multifactorial disease with complex triggers, including hormonal fluctuations, stress, diet, and environmental factors like bright lights and loud noises. Our model incorporated these variables, offering a comprehensive understanding of the cause-effect relationships in migraine onset. Hormonal changes, especially in women, and stress were identified as major contributors to migraine episodes. Additionally, dietary factors and sleep disturbances were shown to influence the frequency and severity of migraines. By accurately predicting the likelihood of migraine based on these factors, our model provides valuable insights into personalized prevention and management strategies. The effects of migraine are wide-reaching, significantly impairing quality of life, productivity, and mental health. Chronic migraines are

often linked to anxiety and depression, exacerbating their debilitating impact. Our predictive model allows for personalized interventions that target individual triggers, potentially reducing the frequency and severity of attacks. For example, stress management techniques, hormonal regulation, or specific dietary adjustments could be recommended for high-risk individuals.

Future research directions include expanding the dataset to improve the generalizability of the model and integrating more advanced ML techniques, such as deep learning or ensemble methods. Additionally, incorporating explainable AI (XAI) methods will enhance model interpretability, making the results more clinically actionable. XAI can help clinicians understand the driving factors behind migraine predictions and tailor interventions accordingly. Further, the integration of real-time data collection via wearable devices offers an exciting opportunity for dynamic migraine monitoring. These devices can track physiological and environmental factors in real-time, providing actionable insights into migraine triggers and enabling timely interventions. In summary, this study demonstrates the potential of ML in predicting migraine occurrences by analyzing cause-effect relationships and improving model accuracy through feature selection. Our findings highlight the importance of personalized approaches to migraine management, focusing on individualized triggers and prevention strategies. Future work should focus on expanding datasets, adopting advanced ML techniques, and developing real-time monitoring tools to enhance the predic-

tive accuracy and clinical applicability of these models, ultimately contributing to more effective migraine management and improved quality of life for sufferers.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study evaluated the predictive efficacy of various machine learning algorithms on a dataset with 23 features, identifying the Gradient Boosting Classifier as the top performer with 90% accuracy, followed by Random Forest and Logistic Regression at 87.5% and 85%, respectively. Initial configurations of SVC and KNN yielded suboptimal results, but targeted feature importance analysis and the selection of 17 significant features led to substantial accuracy improvements of 21.25% and 15%, respectively. While Decision Tree showed a marginal accuracy increase of 1.25%, Gradient Boosting experienced a slight decline of 2.5%, potentially due to over-reliance on excluded features, and Logistic Regression and Random Forest exhibited consistent robustness across feature sets. These findings underscore the critical role of feature selection and hyperparameter tuning in optimizing model performance while highlighting nuanced trade-offs between model complexity and predictive accuracy. Future research could benefit from expanding datasets, integrating advanced ensemble and explainable AI techniques, and incorporating longitudinal data to enhance predictive reliability and interpretability, contributing to the advancement of machine learning applications in predictive analytics.

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8. AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

All authors contributed to the study conception and design. Material preparation, data collection, and analysis were performed by Somapika Das. The first draft of the manuscript was written by all authors who commented on previous versions of the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare no conflict of interest. The research was conducted independently, with no financial or personal relationships that could influence the results, ensuring the integrity and objectivity of the findings.

10. DATA AVAILABILITY

The supporting data from this study are openly available in the following: Migraine disease dataset at <https://www.kaggle.com/datasets/ranzeet013/migraine-dataset>.

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