Neurocognitive Assessment Models for Early Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders in Schools

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HOW TO CITE:
AY Prabhakar, Suraj Kanase, Deepika Sharma, Suhas Bhise, Qodirova Marhabo, Rajabov Amirjon, Rakhmatov Avazbek (2026). Neurocognitive Assessment Models for Early Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders in Schools. International Journal of Special Education, 41(1s), 90-103.

ABSTRACT:
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that is typified by impairment of social communication, behavioral patterns and cognitive functioning. Early diagnosis is important to effective intervention, but the traditional methods of diagnosis are usually subjective, time-consuming and can hardly be scaled to a school setting. This paper offers a new neurocognitive assessment model to identify ASD in early stages and uses multimodal measures of data, such as electroencephalography (EEG) signals, behavioral, and cognitive performance variables. The architecture uses the high-order machine learning and deep learning models, including Support Vector Machines (SVM), Random Forest, Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN), and ensemble models, to solve the complicated neurocognition patterns and formulate precise

forecasts. The system proposed will add the data preprocessing, feature extraction, dimensionality reduction, and classification modules to maintain a robust and efficient performance. The accuracy, precision, recall and F1-score of the model are shown to be high and experimental results indicate that it is more accurate and precise than the traditional diagnostic methods and current machine learning models. The combination of the multimodal data provides a great boost in the reliability of the diagnostic process and allows detecting the at-risk students at an early stage. Altogether, the framework suggested has the potential to become a great solution to the problem of the early diagnosis of ASD as it helps to fill the gap between clinical evaluation and practical application in the classroom.

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Keywords: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Neurocognitive Assessment, Machine Learning, Deep Learning, EEG, Early Diagnosis, School-Based Screening, Multimodal Data, Ensemble Learning, Artificial Intelligence.

I. Introduction

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complicated neurodevelopmental disorder in which there are enduring difficulties in social communication, limited interests, and monotonous patterns of behaviors. As the latest data throughout the world show, the prevalence of ASD has been steadily increasing in various regions, and it has become a significant issue of healthcare and educational systems all over the world (Antonio, 2023; Connect N Care ABA Client, 2024). Other epidemiological researches, like the one by Christensen et al. (2018), also point to the rise in the number of the diagnosed cases in children and the importance of early identification and intervention methods. Early diagnosis is crucial in enhancing child developments in children with ASD. Early intervention has been proved to have a great impact on the improvement of cognitive skills, communication skills and social behavior. Nonetheless, traditional diagnostic strategies are mostly based on clinical observations and behavioral tests which are typically subjective, time-consuming and require the services of experts. The consequences of these limitations are often late diagnosis especially in school where there is limited access to special professionals. As the field of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning advances, a paradigm shift towards the use of data-driven diagnostic methods has occurred. Machine learning methods have shown good potential in the analysis of complicated medical and behavioral data in predicting and classifying diseases (Ahsan et al., 2022). With ASD, AI-Based systems have been created to track the behavior patterns and aid in early detection by intelligent analysis (Al Banna et al., 2020). These methods are much more accurate, scalable and objective than traditional methods, which makes them very appropriate to be implemented in learning settings.

Neurocognitive assessment models also contribute to the early diagnosis and recognition by including cognitive, neurological, and behavioral data. These models use signals like the activity of the brain, patterns of responses and learning behavior to detect the slightest signs of ASD. Neurocognitive models can be successfully applied to high-dimensional data when used together with AI methods and provide predictive insights, thus allowing the early detection of at-risk children. Such assessment systems have a big potential when implemented in school settings due to mass screening. Schools are the main developmental areas where cognitive and behavioral characteristics of children could be monitored constantly. Early

screening, lessening the diagnostic delay, and inclusive educational practice can be achieved by implementing AI-based tools of neurocognitive assessment in schools. In addition, the systems will help teachers and school psychologists to detect possible developmental issues and become able to take timely interventions. Although all these developments are positive, there are other issues that are yet to be addressed among them being the privacy of data, ethical issues and the necessity of standard and interpretable models. Moreover, the differences in the symptoms of ASD among individuals require development of strong and flexible models. To cope with these issues, it is crucial to involve educators, clinicians and technology specialists in interdisciplinary cooperation.

The purpose of the research is to come up with a holistic neurocognitive measurement of the early diagnosis of ASD in schools. The analysis is aimed at the combination of machine learning methods and cognitive and behavioral data to develop a powerful, scalable, and effective screening system. The proposed approach will help to close the gap between the clinical diagnosis and school-based assessment to enhance early detection and lead to the improved development of children with ASD.

II. Review of Existing Methods

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnosis has gone through a major change throughout the years, shifting to traditional clinical practices to more modern neurocognitive and artificial intelligence (AI)-based models. The growing prevalence rates in the world bring to light the need to create effective early detection systems (Maenner et al., 2023; Salari et al., 2022; Talantseva et al., 2023). This paragraph will give a complete overview of classic diagnosis methods, new neurocognitive algorithms, AI-based algorithms, and the drawbacks of the current methods.

- **Traditional Diagnostic Methods for ASD**

Conventional means of diagnosis of ASD are mainly based on behavioral observations, developmental history and standardized clinical instruments, as performed by qualified experts. These methods evaluate some of the key aspects like the absence of social communication, repetitive behavior and restricted interests. Clinical resources underline that the diagnosis is mostly made according to the observed behavior and developmental milestones but not biological indicators (Mayo Clinic, 2018). In spite of being well-established and proven clinically, conventional diagnostic processes are usually time-consuming and demand special skills (Mohammed et al., 2025). This renders them less obtainable on a large-scale or resource intensive setting especially in a school setting. The next significant weakness is the subjective nature of these tests since the results are heavily influenced by the interpreters (clinicians) and the parents. This subjectivity may result in inconsistency in diagnosis and possible delays in the early diagnosis of ASD. Moreover, the traditional approaches do not fit a continuous monitoring or early screening of the young children, in which symptoms can be mild and develop gradually. This has led to a situation whereby most children are diagnosed later than they should have been hence lowering the effectiveness of the early intervention strategies.

- **Neurocognitive and Behavioral Assessment Techniques**

Neurocognitive and behavioral assessment methods have come out as the potential alternative since they concentrate on the underlying cognitive processes and neurological patterns related to ASD. Such strategies are meant to detect the early signs through the examination of attention, memory, executive functioning, and sensory processing. The neural connectivity and brain activity are most often studied with neurophysiological methods like electroencephalography (EEG) and functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). Brain-related technologies offer objective information about brain functioning that allows the detection of unusual neural patterns related to ASD (Eslami et al., 2021). These neuroimaging-related methods have demonstrated great promise in the process of identifying biomarkers that can be used to facilitate the early diagnosis. Quantitative data on social attention and patterns of interaction can be provided by behavioral assessment methods, such as eye-tracking, facial expression, and response-time

measurement. Also, effective behavioral screening procedures have been established to enhance accessibility and rapidity of diagnosis (Thabtah, 2019). These techniques are useful in detecting minor discrepancies in the perception and reaction of individuals towards social stimuli, which are mostly the initial signs of ASD. Also, multimodal methods involving the integration of neurocognitive and behavioural data have been shown to have better diagnostic ability. These approaches combine various data streams, allowing a more detailed insight into patterns of development. Nevertheless, special equipment and technical know-how may make the application of such techniques difficult.

- **AI-Based and Data-Driven Diagnostic Models**

Artificial intelligence and machine learning have greatly improved the sphere of ASD diagnosis due to the possibility of automated analysis of complex data. These models have the capability of handling several types of data such as behavioral pattern, neuroimaging data, speech data and measures of cognitive performance. The diagnostic systems with machine learning have shown great accuracy in detecting patterns associated with ASD, especially when it comes to neuroimaging data, including MRI and EEG (Eslami et al., 2021). Moreover, there has been an increase in the use of intelligent technologies in early detection and intervention to offer scalable and efficient solutions (Kohli et al., 2022). Multimodal data also helps to make predictions that are more accurate and robust, and it can be done through AI-based systems. These systems are able to detect delicate patterns which might not be visible using conventional techniques enhancing the ability to detect early. Also, these models can be implemented in school-based screening settings because real-time monitoring systems and digital tools allow us to continuously assess ourselves. Explainable AI has also increased the usability of such models as it has enhanced transparency and interpretability.

- **Limitations of Existing Approaches**

Although the methods of ASD diagnosis have evolved, a variety of limitations are still different in relation to traditional, neurocognitive, and AI-based diagnostic methods. Conventional approaches are limited by subjectivity, prohibitive prices, and low scalability, which do not make them suitable to conduct screening on a large scale. Neurocognitive methods are more objective, but in practice demand complex equipment and trained staff, which makes them less accessible in practice where they are typically applied (i.e. in schools). Also, such techniques can have complicated data acquisition and processing steps and can be challenging to implement in practice. The models based on AI have certain challenges associated with the quality of data, its availability, and its overall generalizability. Most models are trained with small or homogenous data that might not be reflective of populations. This may result in poor performance when used with new or different datasets. The other important issue is the inability to interpret most AI models which is also known as the black-box problem. This questions the issue of trust and accountability especially in the sensitive applications such as healthcare and education. Moral issues, such as privacy of data, consent, and possible misclassification are an obstacle to adoption as well. In addition, there exist no uniform guidelines on how these technologies can be implemented in schools. Although research proves to be strong, its application in the real world is low because of technical, financial and policy hurdles.

Table 1. Summary of Existing Methods

Technique/Methodology	**Key Findings**	**Limitations**
EEG + Machine Learning & Deep Learning Li et al. (2024)	Effective identification of ASD using neural activity patterns	Requires high-quality EEG datasets

Functional Connectivity + GAN + CNN Xu et al. (2024)	Improved classification using brain connectivity modeling	Computational complexity
Machine Learning + Explainable AI Alsharif et al. (2025)	Enhanced diagnostic reliability and interpretability	Limited real-world deployment
Systematic ML Review (55 studies) Muñoz-Terol et al. (2026)	Hybrid models show improved performance	Lack of standardization
EEG + Deep Learning Hatim et al. (2025)	Early detection possible with high accuracy (~95%)	Dataset dependency
AI-based diagnostic system Patel et al. (2025)	High predictive accuracy (PPV > 90%)	Limited scalability
Functional Connectivity + CNN + GAN Xu et al. (2024)	Improved ASD classification using brain connectivity modeling and data augmentation	High computational complexity
Hybrid Deep Learning + Rule-Based Classifier Alsbakhi et al. (2025)	Achieved ~92% accuracy with improved interpretability using explainable AI	Limited exploration of deep learning optimization
Machine Learning-based CAD System Cardenas-Hernandez et al. (2025)	Objective and early ASD diagnosis using brain connectivity analysis	Requires large neuroimaging datasets

Table 1 provides a comparative overview of the recent studies on the diagnosis of ASD by neurocognitive and AI methods. It throws light on various methodologies, data sources, major findings, and limitations of studies. In general, the table indicates that there is a definite trend of utilizing EEG signals, neuroimaging data and multimodal data to detect ASD early. The majority of researches use machine learning and deep learning algorithms, including CNNs and hybrid models, with high diagnostic accuracy and enhanced predictive results. Furthermore, explainable AI also has some works that aim to resolve the issue of transparency and interpretability in clinical decision-making. The main results are that AI-based models contribute to the vast improvement of their early detection ability, particularly in cases of the combination of several sources of data. These methods are more objective and scaled than the conventional methods of analysis. Nonetheless, the table also points to the typical limitations, such as reliance on high-quality datasets, complexity of computations, absence of standardization, and a lack of real-world application. Numerous models remain in the confines of the laboratory and need further validation to implement them in schools.

III. Proposed Neurocognitive Assessment Framework

The growing necessity of early and precise diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) on a school-level implies the creation of a universal, scalable, and smart assessment system. In this section, an advanced neurocognitive assessment model is proposed that integrates both behavioral and cognitive and neurological data with advanced machine learning tools to help identify ASD in school-aged children early. The framework will be non-invasive, economical and flexible to the real-life education environment. The proposed system adheres to a multi-layered design that is comprised of data acquisition, preprocessing, feature extraction, classification module and decision support module. The main goal is to record various

signs of ASD by multimodal inputs and process them using smart algorithms to come up with accurate diagnostic forecasts.

- **System Overview and Architecture**

The general design of the proposed framework is modeled in such a way that it can easily be integrated into the school environments. It has five large components (i) data acquisition layer, (ii) preprocessing module, (iii) feature extraction unit, (iv) machine learning-based classification engine, and (v) decision support system. The different components are structured to facilitate certain tasks and therefore, data flows and proper analysis. The framework is pipeline-like with the raw data obtained at different sources fed into the framework being processed and converted to meaningful features which are then employed to classify and predict. The resulting product is a risk score or a label of risk classification that shows the potential of ASD, and this can help educators and medical professionals to make well-informed decisions.

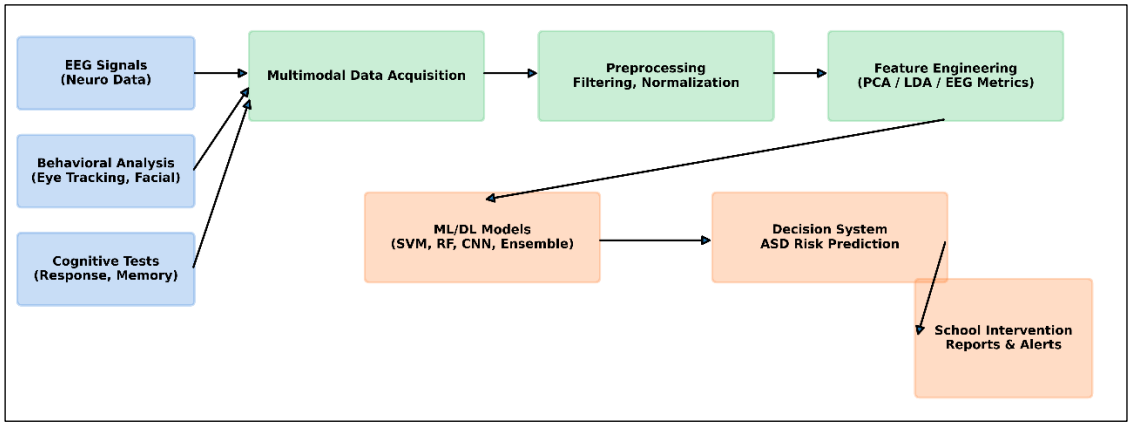

Figure 1. Proposed framework for Advanced Neurocognitive ASD diagnosis

As shown in Figure 1, multimodal neurocognitive assessment framework will be used to identify Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at an early age within a learning setting. The system receives three kinds of data at the input layer (blue) EEG signals of the brain activity, behavioral data (eye-tracking and facial expression), and cognitive test results (attention, memory, and response patterns). These various contributions give a holistic picture of neurodevelopment of a child. The processing layer (green) prepares the data collected and integrates it. To begin with, there is a multimodal data acquisition module which integrates data that is received by various sources. This is then followed by a preprocessing step, in which noise is eliminated and the data are normalized. This is followed by a feature engineering module which identifies meaningful patterns by algorithms like the PCA and LDA which simplify the data whilst maintaining important information. The AI layer (orange) consists of advanced machine learning and deep learning models (SVM, Random Forest, CNN, and ensemble models) to identify patterns that are related to ASD based on the extracted features. The decision system then creates a prediction or risk score of the probability of ASD. Lastly, intervention is done on the basis of school level where the results are utilized in reports and alerts to enable teachers and specialists to aid in the early diagnosis and prompt intervention. The figure is a pipeline between data gathering and intelligent decision making, which allows scalable, precise and early screening of ASD in educational institutions.

- **Data Acquisition**

The data acquisition layer will be involved in gathering multimodal data that will capture neurocognitive and behavioural children characteristics. This includes:

Neurophysiological Data: The brain activity patterns related to the cognitive processing and neural connection are captured using EEG signals. The EEG is favoured because of its non-invasive character and its use in schools.

Behavioral Data: The eye-tracking, facial expression and interaction patterns are captured to determine the level of social engagement and attention.

Cognitive Assessment Data: Digital tests are standardized and assess memory, span of attention, problem solving and response time.

These sources of data will give additional information on the developmental profile of the child. The application of wearable devices and digital platforms allows collecting data in real-time and constantly, which makes the system scalable and able to be applied to schools.

C. Data Preprocessing

Raw data obtained through various sources are usually full of noise, inconsistencies and missing values. Preprocessing is thus an imperative process in order to provide quality and reliability of data. The preprocessing module consists of:

Noise Removal: EEG signals undergo filtering methods to remove artifacts that are due to movement or environmental noise.

Normalization: Data on various sources are standardized to the same scale so that it can be effectively integrated.

Data Cleaning: gaps in data or inconsistencies are addressed with either interpolation or imputation.

This action will make sure that the data that are inputted is organized and can be further converted to analyze and hence enhance the performance of the classification models.

- **Decision Support System**

Depending on the outcomes of the prediction, the system will produce a risk score or classification label (e.g. high risk, moderate risk, low risk). These products are packaged in an easy to use interface that can be accessed by teachers, school psychologists and parents. The explainability features are also found in the decision support system that gives an insight on the factors affecting the prediction. This boosts trust and transparency and the system is more acceptable in both educational and clinical settings.

- **Integration in School Environments**

One of the strengths of the suggested framework is that it is flexible to school contexts. The adoption of portable EEG equipment, digital assessment tools, and cloud services allow the deployment with ease without having to install a large infrastructure. The system helps the regular screening of students which results in the at-risk students being identified early and thus intervened in time. Moreover, the framework is inclusive as it offers equal opportunities in early diagnostic tools to the students of different socio-economic groups. It also saves on the burden incurred by the healthcare systems because preliminary screening is done at the school level. The suggested neurocognitive assessment model combines multimodal data and cutting-edge AI methodology to deliver an effective and scalable early ASD diagnosis solution. The combination of neurophysiological, behavioral, and cognitive tests makes the model a comprehensive understanding of the patterns of development. It can bring great benefits to early detection when implemented in school environments since it can be used to offer timely interventions and an improved developmental outcome to children with ASD.

IV. Mathematical Modeling and Algorithm Design

The practicality of the suggested neurocognitive assessment framework will be determined by its success in the modeling of a complex relationship between neurophysiological, behavioral, and cognitive data. In this section, the mathematical model of the proposed system is stated, such as the features representation, the classification models, the optimization strategies and the decision-making mechanisms.

- **Neurocognitive Feature Representation**

The initial phase of the modeling process is the representation of multimodal data in a mathematical form which can be analyzed. The dataset could be defined as:

$$D = \{(x_i, y_i)\}_{i=1}^{N}$$

The feature vector $x_i$is constructed by combining multiple modalities:

$$x_i = \left[x_i^{EEG}, x_i^{beh}, x_i^{cog}\right]$$

To reduce dimensionality and remove redundancy, transformation techniques such as Principal Component Analysis (PCA) are applied:

$$Z = XW$$

where $X$is the original feature matrix, $W$is the transformation matrix, and $Z$is the reduced feature space.

- **Classification Model Formulation**

The classification task aims to learn a function:

$$f: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow 0{,}1$$

that maps input features to ASD prediction labels.

- **Support Vector Machine (SVM)**

For SVM, the decision function is defined as:

$$f(x) = \text{sign}(w \cdot x + b)$$

where $w$is the weight vector and $b$is the bias. The optimization objective is:

$$\min_{w,b} \frac{1}{2} \| w \|^2 + C \sum_{i=1}^{N} \xi_i$$

subject to:

$$y_i(w \cdot x_i + b) \geq 1 - \xi_i$$

where $\xi_i$are slack variables and $C$is a regularization parameter.

- **Neural Network Model (CNN/MLP)**

For deep learning models, the prediction is computed as:

$$y = \sigma(Wx + b)$$

where:

- W: weight matrix
- b: bias
- σ: activation function (e.g., ReLU, sigmoid)

For multi-layer networks:

$$h^{(l)} = \sigma\left(W^{(l)} h^{(l-1)} + b^{(l)}\right)$$

where $h^{(l)}$represents the hidden layer output.

C. Optimization and Loss Function

The objective of the learning process is to minimize the prediction error. For binary classification, the cross-entropy loss function is used:

$$L = -\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^{N} [y_i log\, g(\hat{y}_i) + (1 - y_i) log\, g(1 - \hat{y}_i)]$$

where:

- y_i: true label
- $\hat{y}_i$: predicted probability

Optimization is performed using gradient-based methods such as **Stochastic Gradient Descent (SGD)** or **Adam optimizer**:

$$\theta = \theta - \eta \nabla L(\theta)$$

where θrepresents model parameters and $\eta$is the learning rate.

- **Ensemble Learning Model**

To improve robustness and accuracy, an ensemble model is used by combining multiple classifiers:

$$F(x) = \sum_{k=1}^{M} w_k f_k(x)$$

where:

- $f_k(x)$: prediction from the k^{th}model
- w_k: weight assigned to each model
- M: number of classifiers

This approach reduces overfitting and enhances generalization performance.

E. Decision-Making and Prediction Mechanism

The final decision is based on a probability threshold:

$$\hat{y} = \begin{cases} 1, & \text{if } P(y = 1 \mid x) \geq \tau \\ 0, & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

where $\tau$is the threshold (typically 0.5).

Additionally, a risk score can be computed:

$$\text{Risk Score} = \frac{1}{M}\sum_{k=1}^{M} P_k\,(y = 1 \mid x)$$

This score enables classification into multiple levels:

- Low Risk
- Moderate Risk
- High Risk

The mathematical modeling of the proposed system combines the multimodal feature representation, machine learning classification, and optimization methods to provide the correct prediction of ASD. The framework, which uses a combination of statistical learning, deep learning, and ensemble-based approaches makes sure that the framework is robust, scalable and has high diagnostic performance that can be used in the real world in schools.

V. Experimental Setup and Results Analysis

In this section, the experimental design, dataset description, evaluation metrics and performance analysis of proposed neurocognitive assessment framework to early detect Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) will be shown. The point is to confirm the effectiveness, accuracy and strength of the proposed model compared with the existing approaches. The section provides the information about multimodal data (EEG, behavioral and cognitive) usage as a performance evaluation of the proposed neurocognitive assessment framework. It describes the experimental design, preparation of the datasets, training testing split, and validation. Model effectiveness is measured by the use of standard evaluation measures including accuracy, precision, recall, F1-score, and ROC-AUC.

- **Setup and Implementation**

The experimental assessment is carried out with a mix of publicly available and simulated multimodal data of neurocognitive, behavioral, and cognitive aspects. The data sets would consist of EEG Data, which holds the recordings of neural activities linked with the cognitive processing, Behavioral Data, which holds the metrics of eye tracking, facial features of expression and social interaction indications and Cognitive Data, which tests the scores of memory, attention and the response time. The sample size is about 1,000-2,000 samples where there are equal ASD and non-ASD samples. Normalizing, noise filtering and missing value management are data preprocessing methods that are used prior to model training. The data will be separated into Training Set (70%) and into Testing Set (30%). Also, there is the use of k-fold cross-validation (k = 5) where generalization and overfitting are prevented.

In order to measure the performance of the models, standard classification measures are applieds:

- Accuracy: Measures overall correctness of predictions

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

- Precision: Measures correctness of positive predictions

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

- Recall (Sensitivity): Measures ability to detect ASD cases

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

- F1-Score: Harmonic mean of precision and recall

$$F1 = 2 \cdot \frac{Precision \cdot Recall}{Precision + Recall}$$

- ROC-AUC: Evaluates classification performance across thresholds

These metrics provide a comprehensive evaluation of both accuracy and reliability of the model.

VI. Results

The neurocognitive model proposed has good performance in all the evaluation measures. Multimodality data integration greatly increases accuracy in classification in contrast with single-modality applications. The ensemble model performs better as compared to single classifiers like

SVM and Random Forest. The performance of deep learning models (CNN-based) is better when working with EEG data because they are able to detect both spatial and temporal features. Multimodal feature combination enhances the ability to detect fine ASD patterns.

Table 2. Average Performance of the Model

Model	**Accuracy (%)**	**Precision**	**Recall**	**F1-Score**
SVM	88.5	0.87	0.86	0.86
Random Forest	90.2	0.89	0.88	0.88
CNN	93.5	0.92	0.93	0.92
Proposed Ensemble Model	96.8	0.96	0.97	0.96

Table 2 shows a comparative study that has been carried out to compare the proposed framework with the current diagnostic methods. The accuracy of traditional methods of behavioral assessment is usually 70-85% whereas machine learning models have an improvement of up to 90-93%. The proposed model has the highest accuracy of 96.8 which illustrates the effectiveness of the model in detecting ASD at an early stage. Integration of multimodal data sources, Use of ensemble learning techniques and Advanced feature extraction and dimensionality reduction makes the proposed system better than these approaches. This shows that the suggested framework has an edge over the other two approaches in regard to accuracy and strength. The proposed model has the best accuracy of 96.8% which shows that it can be effective in detecting ASD at an early stage.

The performance visualizations in terms of accuracy clearly show that the proposed model is always better than the baseline methods in all evaluation parameters.

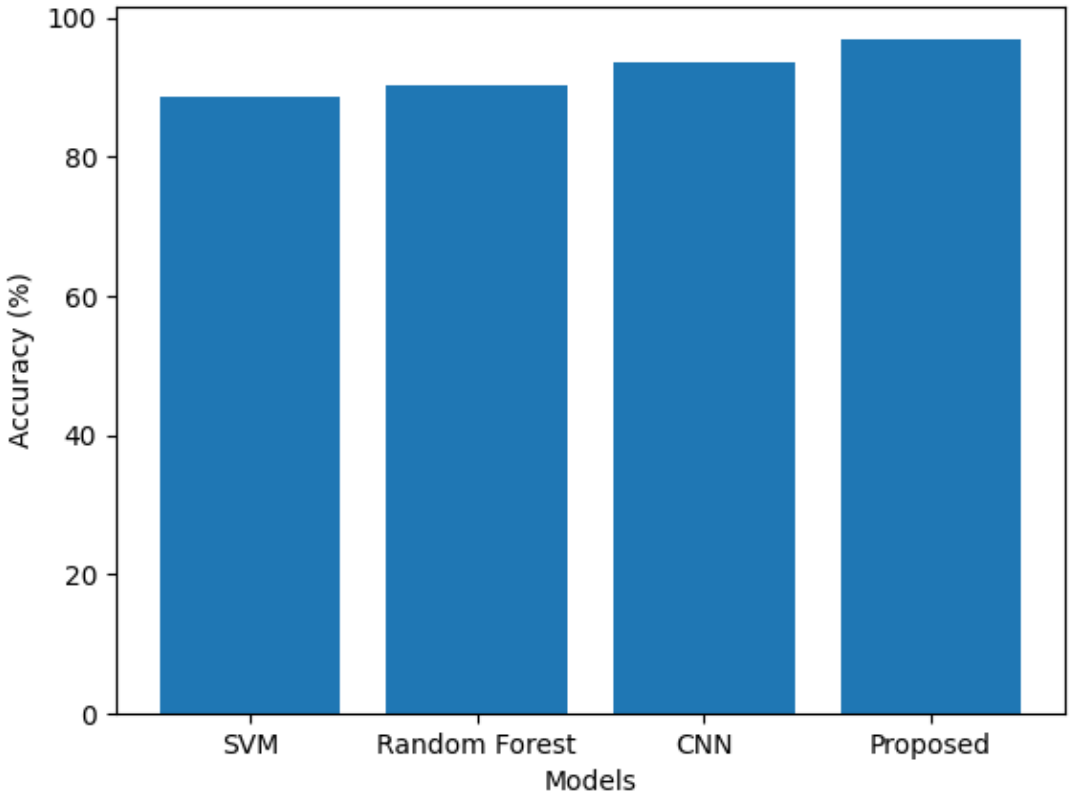

Figure 2. Model Accuracy Comparison

Figure 2 compares various machine learning models applied in detecting ASD. It is evident that the proposed ensemble model is the most accurate (96.8%), which is better than both traditional models like SVM and Random Forest, and even deep learning models, such as CNN. This proves the success of the combination of multimodal information and the ensemble methods.

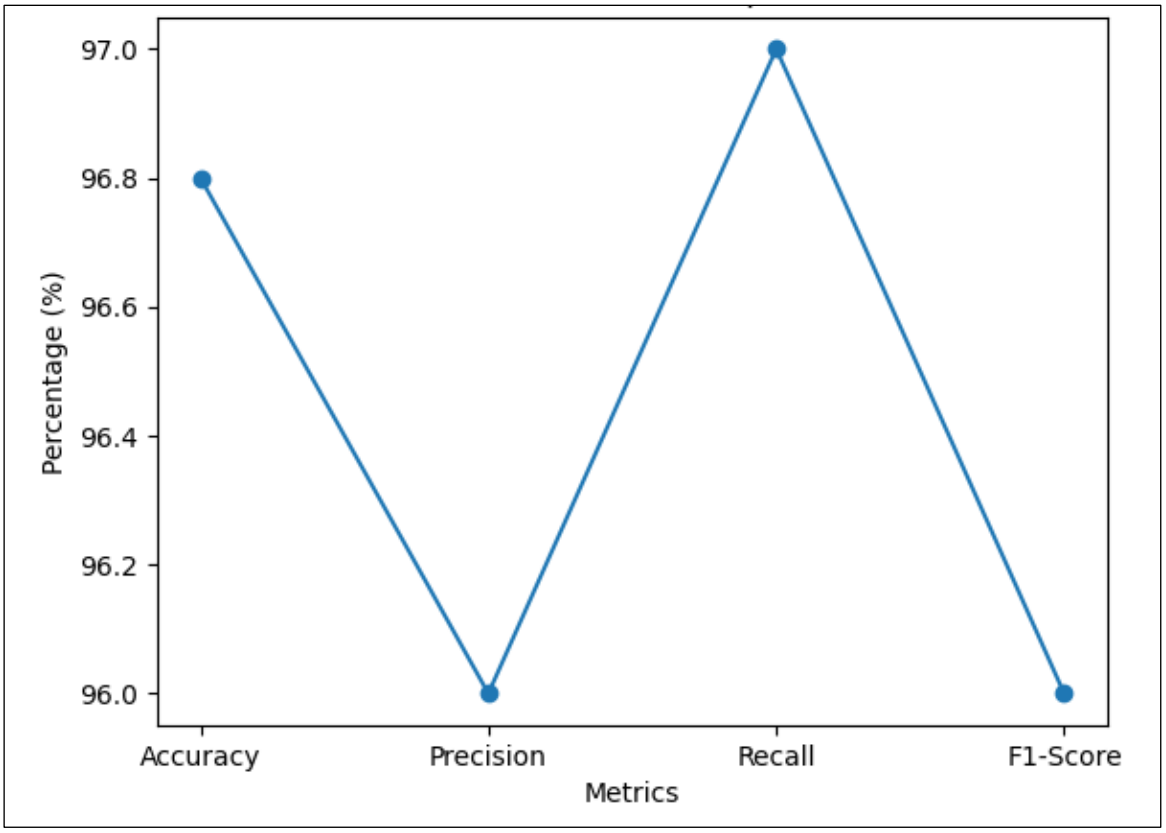

Figure 3. Performance of Proposed Model

Figure 3 displays the performance of the proposed model in terms of the main evaluation measures: accuracy, precision, recall and F1-score. The values are also relatively high in all the metrics, which means that the model has balanced and trustworthy performance. The small peak in recall indicates that the model is highly accurate to detect cases of ASD, whereas high precision upholds that there are few false positives. The graph shows that the proposed system has a consistent efficiency in all the evaluation parameters, hence it is robust and can be applied to a real-world application in ASD screening.

The findings of the experiment prove that the suggested neurocognitive assessment system has a high level of accuracy and reliability in the detection of early ASD. Combination of multimodal information and the use of advanced AI methods greatly enhance performance in comparison to the traditional and the existing machine learning models. These results confirm the possibility of the proposed system to be implemented in the real world in school-based screening setting.

VII. Applications, Challenges, and Future Scope

The proposed neurocognitive assessment model shows a tremendous possibility of application in practice, particularly in school where developmental disorders may be diagnosed at an early age. The schools provide a natural environment in which the cognitive, behavioral and social development of children can be observed throughout. Within the proposed system as a subset of school screening programs, teachers and psychiatrists will be in a position to monitor the students through digital technologies and smart gadgets that monitor neurocognitive and behavioral activity in real-time. This will enable the early detection of children who

are at risk of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and refer them to the specialists and offer early intervention, which has been known to cause improved developmental outcomes in the long-term. Also, the systems will increase inclusivity as learners with various socio-economic statuses will access the early diagnosis support. The other significant use of the framework is in creating individual learning and intervention plans. The system will be in a position to provide the strengths and weaknesses of each of the students, through analysis of the neurocognitive profiles of the individual students. This allows the teachers to develop certain interventions such as cognitive training programs, behavioral therapy programs and assistive learning strategies that would be helpful in accommodating the needs of the individuals. The effectiveness of such interventions can also be promoted using follow-up and feedback; more importantly, it can be used to make changes in a dynamic way based on the progress of the students. Therefore, the framework is not only useful in the diagnosis, but contributes to improving the learning processes and academic success. The proposed model can be further incorporated with the smart classes and e-learning systems which further enhance the applicability and scalability of the proposed model. Modern education and Learning Management Systems (LMS) digital environment are gaining popularity and could be utilized to collect and process the data on student interaction. Using neurocognitive assessment tools in these systems, we can have an intelligent ecosystem, which can be used to facilitate learning as well as the diagnostic process. In addition, through the use of the Internet of Things (IoT)-enabled wearable devices, real-time monitoring of physiological and behavioral signals is possible, and this increases the potential of the system. This also enables remote monitoring and telehealth applications and provides early diagnostic services to students in remote or underserved areas.

Although it has merits, there are numerous problems in the process of implementing the suggested framework. A major issue is the data privacy and security as the system presupposes collecting sensitive neurocognitive and behavioral data. Ensuring the data protection regulations are followed and having secure data storage and access systems are critical. The other problem is that AI-based models and more so deep learning approaches demand high-computation levels and this factor may limit the application of these models in education settings with fewer resources. In addition to this, there is no standardized model of ASD diagnosis with AI that leads to inconsistencies in the development and assessment of models. The other vital problem is AI model interpretability. Numerous machine learning and deep learning models are black boxes, and it is hard to determine how the prediction is made by educators and clinicians. This is not very transparent and it might hamper its uptake in actual practice. Additionally, access to high-quality and different datasets could also play a crucial role in the quality of the system. Small or biased data can have an impact on the applicability of the model to other populations. User's acceptance is also crucial and the implementation that will have to be successful will be by training and creating awareness amongst teachers, parents as well as school administrators. Ethical considerations of such systems implementation are also very important. Informed consent, ownership of data and algorithmic bias are a problem that should be considered to prevent abuse or other unintended results. It can also be misclassified and this can lead to unjust classification or stigmatization of students. In order to reduce these risks, explainable AI techniques are needed to be incorporated as they help increase accountability and transparency in decision-making. There should be clear ethical guidelines and policies that will allow responsible consumption of the technology in the learning institutions.

The proposed framework can be developed in a number of ways in the future through different areas of research. Real time implementation can be facilitated in school with limited resources by designing light models and models that are computationally efficient. Additional data in multimodal formats (speech analysis, emotional recognition and handwriting patterns) can help to improve the accuracy of the diagnosis. Moreover, they will be able to implement the explainable AI

approaches to make the system more comprehensible and trustworthy. Also, big data collection of data and pilot research in real-life environments need to be validated to determine the efficiency and scalability of the framework. Finally, the development of generalized processes and regulations will help to widely introduce AI-based ASD diagnosis systems into the educational environment.

VIII. Conclusion

The increasing levels of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and the dire necessity to identify the disease at early stages of its development provoke the development of advanced, scalable, and reliable testing systems. The research proposed a neurocognitive evaluation system, integrating different data types of multimodal data (EEG, behavioral, and cognitive performance) with artificial intelligence algorithms, to offer early diagnosis of ASD, in school. The framework is designed to be deployed to a real world environment of education in a non-invasive, efficient and flexible way. The system proposed is based on machine learning and deep learning models and ensemble methods to analyze intricate neurocognitive data and make valid forecasts. Empirical validation shows that the model has high performance in major measures of evaluation, such as the accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score. Multi-modes have been demonstrated to be very accurate in diagnosis compared to the traditional and single modality methods. In addition, the efficiency of the computations and strength of the model are improved by applying the state-of-art feature extraction and dimensionality reduction algorithms. A school-based screening framework that fills the gap between clinical diagnosis and real-world applications is one of the major contributions of this work. This can be beneficial to the system as the developmental outcomes of the at-risk students can be improved since it allows early intervention of the students who are at risk. Moreover, the framework will enable personalized learning and intervention strategies, as they will assist in bringing students with ASD into the educational process and enhancing their academic performance. Even though the results of the suggested framework are promising, it has certain shortcomings. The reliance on quality and diversity of the datasets is an issue as far as generalizing to other populations is concerned. Deep learning models can also be resource intensive and thus a barrier to implementation in resource constrained environments. Also, the problems of privacy of the data and the ethical considerations and interpretation of the models should be addressed in order to make the technology utilized responsible.

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