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PREDICTIONS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS MENTAL STRESS USING MACHINE LEARNING ALGORITHMS

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ABSTRACT

Mental stress among college students is a growing concern, as it affects their academic performance, mental well-being, and overall health. The prediction of mental stress in students using machine learning algorithms offers a potential solution to identify at-risk individuals early and provide timely interventions. This system utilizes various features such as demographic data, academic performance, sleep patterns, social interactions, and personal habits to predict mental stress levels among students. Machine learning algorithms, such as Decision Trees, Random Forest, Support Vector Machines (SVM), and Neural Networks, are employed to analyze these features and classify students based on their stress levels.

The system first collects data from surveys, wearable devices, or other monitoring tools, which are then processed and fed into the machine learning model. After training the model on labeled datasets, the system can predict stress levels with a high degree of accuracy, offering a personalized approach to stress management. By predicting mental stress, the system helps in early detection, allowing for proactive support through counseling or wellness programs.

Additionally, the system can be integrated into a mobile or web-based application, providing real-time monitoring of student stress levels. It not only benefits students but also aids academic institutions in managing student welfare, creating a healthier academic environment. This predictive model can lead to more targeted interventions, promoting mental health awareness and improving overall student well-being.

KEYWORDS: Mental Stress, College Students, Machine Learning, Stress Prediction, Decision Trees, Support Vector Machines (SVM), Academic Performance,

Health Monitoring, Early Detection, Wellness Programs.

1.INTRODUCTION

Students with special education needs (SEN) often exhibit behavioral characteristics such as hyperactivity, short attention span, and emotional liability. Many are also at risk for academic and social problems [1]. Research suggests that inappropriate behaviors in SEN students, such as those with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), are associated with abnormalities in brain development [2]. Besides, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and some learning disabilities also have their genetic origin [3]. Contextually inappropriate behaviors (such as aggression and self-harm)can hinder SEN students' social and personal development. Therefore, promoting positive behaviors is an important learning outcome in special education.

Applied behavior analysis (ABA) therapy is an intervention approach aiming at SEN students' behavior change [4].ABA strategies are designed based on behavioral science and principles such as reinforcement and stimulus control. Through promoting desirable behavior change, socially significant outcomes can be facilitated [5]. Recently,Alves et al. offered a systematic review of ABA technologies[6], including support systems for ABA applications(p.118667). The reviewed works ranged from web-based services and data visualisation for teaching children with low-functioning autism [7] to real-time monitoring [8] and data management [9] for personalised intervention. However, a dearth of works targeting ABA outcomes prediction exists. It is worth noting that the behavior analysis processes in ABA therapy are evidence-based and highly systematic. This nature makes data-driven techniques such as learning analytics(LA) suitable for enhancing ABA-related technologies. Meanwhile, LA is often employed in educational practice to understand and optimise learning and the learning environment[10], giving it the potential to enhance existing ABA practice.

This work aims to enhance existing ABA therapy by predicting SEN students' behavior change using educational data in multiple modalities. In particular, our study is guided by the following research questions.

• RQ1 What are the statistical characteristics of ambient environmental, physiological, and motion data collected from SEN students' ABA therapy sessions?

• RQ2 Can sensors and wearable data enhance the prediction of SEN students' behavior change over traditional educational data?

• RQ3 Can machine learning (ML) algorithms be applied to MMLA for SEN students' behavior change prediction, and what is their performance compared with other existing works in MMLA?

The above questions will be answered thoroughly in Section IV and Section V of the current paper. Our work's contributions include the following:

• We design and develop a multimodal data collection system for ABA therapies, collect and analyse data from1,130 ABA therapy sessions, and provide detailed statistical interpretations of our results.

• We show, with statistical evidence, that sensors and wearable data can significantly enhance the prediction of SEN students' behavior change over traditional educational data.

• We demonstrate that ML algorithms and deep neural networks (DNN) can predict SEN students' behavior change accurately. We also provide extensive performance evaluations of our predictive models and benchmark our results with other existing works.

Our research will provide new insights into ABA practices, especially in predicting students' learning with the help of the Internet of Things (IOT) sensors and wearables. Through this work, the broad engineering community will further realize the application of MMLA to enhance behavioral interventions in SEN students and promote their skills acquisition. The new findings presented in this article also provide valuable references for future research in technologies for special education.

2.LITERATURE SURVEY

A. Applied Behavior Analysis

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is an intervention method in which pedagogical strategies derived from the principles of behaviour are systematically applied to promote socially significant behaviours and reduce problem behaviours [4]. The set of basic principles, which are statements about how environmental variables act as input to a function of behaviour, have been evaluated scientifically by experimental analyses of behaviours (p.155). In ABA, behaviour is viewed as the learner's interaction with his or her surrounding environment and involves the movement of some part(s) of the learner's body. Learning behaviour

occurs within the environmental context. At the same time, the learning environment is regarded as the full set of physical circumstances in which the learner is situated.

The learning outcome of ABA lessons is the achievement of behaviour changes that improve learners' quality of life in communication and daily living skills. A systematic and measurable behaviour assessment scheme is defined before the ABA lessons. The target behaviour is often broken down into smaller tasks, while positive reinforcements are often used to encourage goal achievement. Assessment criteria include whether the target task is achieved (plus) or not (minus), whether a prompt from the therapist (prompt) is needed to facilitate task achievement, or if the student is behaving in a way that is unrelated to the task (off task). Furthermore, behaviour change is effective if it is durable over time [11]. Therefore, a subsequent follow-up reassessment of the developed behaviour is needed to ensure the effectiveness of the therapy.

B. Factors Affecting SEN Students' Learning

1) Ambient Environmental Factors

Students with special needs can be susceptible to ambient environmental conditions due to their dysfunction in sensory processing. A previous study showed that high levels of CO2 content caused fatigue and difficulties in concentration in SEN students, especially those with ADHD [12]. Another study performed with intellectually disabled preschool students revealed that classroom thermal discomfort (e.g., high nearby ambient temperature) could distract them from learning and influence their mood and health [13]. The same study also suggested that students with intellectual disabilities (ID) are more vulnerable to acoustic discomforts due to their psychologically stressful conditions (p.115). Researchers also studied the relationship between classroom lighting and SEN students' comfort. They found that inappropriate lighting and glare affect individual SEN students to different extents, while they felt tired and irritated because of lighting discomfort, in general [14]. However, teachers and therapists often have no control over lighting characteristics except switching on or off (p.105).

2) Physiological Factors

Emotion can affect learning and engagement in students with and without SEN. In particular, students with ID often exhibit anxiety due to internal stress. Blood pressure, body temperature, and heart rate are physiological markers for stress that hinder learning [15]. It was shown that mild conditions could reduce these inhibitors in SEN students [16]. It is known that abnormally high or low levels of skin conductance (measured through galvanic skin response, GSR) hindered the learning performance of SEN students [17]. Besides, a study also found that body movement facilitated by motion-based technology positively impacted SEN students' short-term memory skills [18]

3.SYSTEM ANALYSIS

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MMLA employs multiple sources and formats of educational data such as activity logs, audio, video and bio sensors to enrich learning analytics [19]. MMLA is significantly enhanced by the Internet of Things (IoT) technologies because the latter allows convenient capturing of multi modal data from the complex learning environment [20]. Multimodal educational data collected by IoT sensors include those detecting learners' motion (e.g., head and body) and physiological (e,g., heart, brain, and skin) behavior, as well as those measuring the ambient learning environment (e.g.,light,

humidity, temperature, and noise). These data were collectedfrom physical objects or human bodies, then encodedinto a machine-interpretable format and served as input toMMLA [21]. Possible interpretations of the observed learningprocess can be assigned based on validated learningtheories.

Disadvantages

• Our prediction target is a binary output, which limits the available information regarding students' ABA learning for the teachers and therapists.

• The current data collection system works in a one-to-one therapist-to-student setting. While in the daily special education context, classroom teaching is often conducted in one-to-few or one-to-many manners.

• The measurement hardware in the current study is costly. For example, Empatica E4 wristbands were used, whilean E4 wristband can cost more than a thousand USdollars.

3.1 PROPOSED SYSTEM

1) *Multimodal learning data collection:* This includes the performance of the ABA therapies and the capturing of the raw learning data arising in multiple modalities.

2) *Data pre-processing and annotation:* This refers to extracting useful data from the raw records, producing data traces in the required modality, performing data fusion by combining the traces, and adding the learning labels to the fused data to form labeled samples.

3) *Data processing, model building and evaluation:* This consists of standard ML procedures, including any necessary resampling, model building, training, testing, and performance evaluation.

Advantages

• We design and develop a multimodal data collection system for ABA therapies, collect and analyze data from1,130 ABA therapy sessions, and provide detailed statistical interpretations of our results.• We show, with statistical evidence, that sensors and wearable data can significantly enhance the prediction of SEN students' behavior change over traditional educational data.

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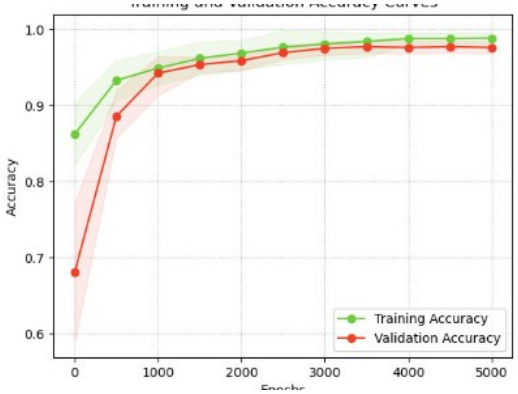
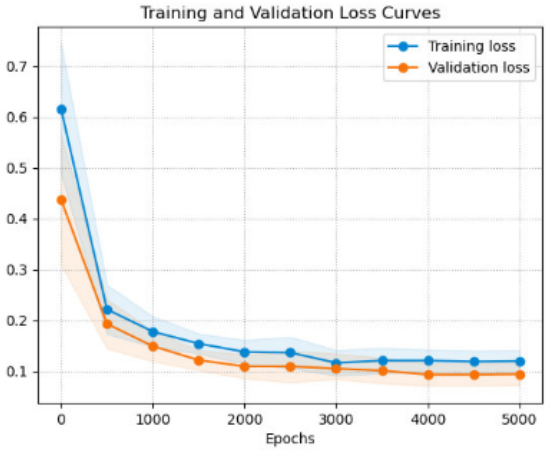
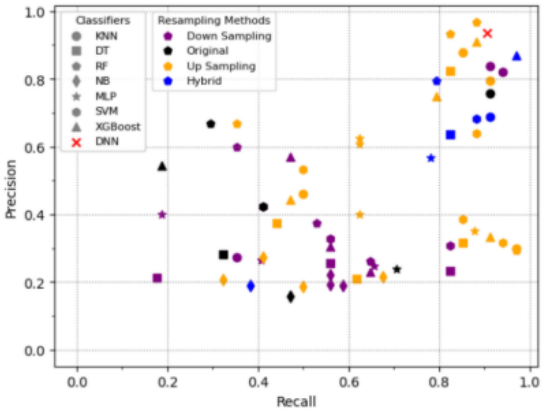
4. OUTPUTSCREENS







5. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we applied MMLA to predict behavior change in SEN students participating in ABA the rapies. A novel MML Aapproach for the prediction of SEN students' behavior change achievement in ABA therapy is presented. We introduced IOT sensors data, including ambient environmental measurements (namely CO2 level, humidity, light intensity, and temperature),physiological measurements(namely IBI, BVP, GSR, and skin temperature), and motion measurements (accelerometer values in X, Y, and Z directions)to develop statistical models for ABA therapy. We also apply ML and DNN techniques to predict SEN students' behavior change.

We studied the statistical characteristics of the multi modal educational data and found that most of our data are not normally distributed. Significant correlations between the variables had been identified, but the problem of multi collinearity did not exist in our variables. We further showed that sensors and wearable data could significantly enhance the prediction of SEN students' behavior change achievement. Various ML algorithms and a DNN were built, optimised, and evaluated. Our results demonstrated that ML(including deep learning) could be applied to MMLA for predicting SEN students' behavior change. While the our classifiers and DNN surpass most of theexisting MMLA models.

However, we also observed variationsin the prediction targets among the compared models.

Promoting positive behaviors in SEN students is important for their personal and social development. At the same time, ABA therapy is an effective intervention approach that aims at behavior change in this population group. The learning environment and the learner physiology conditions during ABA therapy sessions are essential for understanding behavior skills acquisition and their effect on subsequent behavior change. The current study has affirmed the predictive relations between the learning environment, learner physiology, and the learning outcome in ABA therapy. number of limitations and necessary future works are also presented. Overall, our work echoes the growing demands in applying ML to the learning and education of those with brain and developmental disorders [43].

6. REFERENCE

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