

Explainable Machine Learning Models for Software Defect Prediction: An Empirical Study across Multiple Projects

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Abstract:

Software defect prediction plays a critical role in proactive quality assurance by identifying fault-prone components early in the development lifecycle. While machine learning models have significantly improved predictive accuracy, their black-box nature limits trust and practical adoption in engineering environments. This paper proposes an explainable machine learning framework that integrates ensemble learning with SHAP-based interpretability to provide transparent and robust defect prediction across multiple software projects. The framework evaluates both baseline and advanced predictive models using cross-project validation to assess generalization capability. Experimental results demonstrate that ensemble models achieve superior accuracy while explainable analysis reveals consistent defect drivers related to software complexity, change frequency and historical fault patterns. Statistical significance testing confirms substantial performance improvements over traditional classifiers. The proposed approach bridges the gap between predictive performance and engineering interpretability, enabling actionable quality assurance decision support.

Keywords: Software defect prediction, Explainable AI, SHAP, Machine learning, Cross-project validation, Software quality assurance

1. Introduction

Modern software systems have become increasingly complex due to rapid technological evolution, large-scale distributed architectures and continuous feature expansion. Applications today integrate diverse components such as cloud services, microservices, databases and third-party APIs, making software development and maintenance significantly more challenging than in traditional monolithic systems. As system complexity grows, so does the likelihood of introducing defects during development and evolution.

Defects in software systems can lead to severe operational failures, financial losses and reputational damage, particularly in safety-critical and business-critical domains. Numerous studies have shown that the cost of fixing defects increases exponentially when detected in later stages of the software lifecycle. Defects discovered after deployment often require extensive debugging, patching and regression testing, which disrupt system availability and increase maintenance effort. Consequently, early identification of defect-prone components is a key objective of modern software quality assurance (QA) practices.

Despite advances in testing methodologies and automated tools, many QA processes remain largely reactive. Traditional approaches focus on detecting defects after code has been written or deployed, relying heavily on manual inspection, test execution and post-release bug reports. Such practices are resource-intensive

and often fail to scale with the pace of contemporary software development. This limitation has motivated the adoption of predictive approaches that aim to anticipate defect occurrence before failures manifest.

a. Role of Artificial Intelligence in Software Quality Assurance

The increasing availability of software repositories, version control histories and defect tracking systems has enabled the application of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) techniques to software quality prediction. Rather than relying on predefined rules or static thresholds, AI-based models learn patterns from historical data to identify components that are likely to contain defects.

Predictive defect detection represents a shift from traditional test-centric QA toward data-driven quality engineering. By analyzing code metrics, process metrics and historical fault information, ML models can prioritize high-risk modules for testing and code review, thereby optimizing QA resources. Compared to conventional testing approaches that treat all components uniformly, predictive analytics supports targeted and risk-aware quality assurance.

This transition from rule-based QA to learning-based QA has demonstrated promising results in improving defect detection efficiency and reducing maintenance costs. However, as AI models become more complex, particularly with ensemble and deep learning methods, concerns have emerged regarding their transparency and reliability in real-world engineering contexts.

b. Trust and Explainability Challenge in AI-Based Defect Prediction

Many high-performing machine learning models used for defect prediction operate as black boxes, producing accurate predictions without offering clear explanations of how decisions are made. While such models may achieve strong predictive performance, their lack of interpretability limits their practical adoption in software engineering environments.

From an engineering perspective, developers and QA teams require not only predictions but also understandable reasons behind those predictions. Knowing which software metrics or development behaviors contribute to defect risk enables informed decision-making, targeted refactoring and focused testing strategies. Without explanations, predictive outputs remain difficult to trust and validate.

Moreover, regulatory frameworks and industrial best practices increasingly emphasize transparent and accountable AI systems especially in domains where automated decisions influence operational outcomes. The absence of interpretability raises concerns related to model bias, erroneous predictions and limited diagnostic capabilities.

These challenges highlight the growing importance of explainable artificial intelligence (XAI) techniques, which aim to provide human-interpretable insights into machine learning predictions while preserving predictive accuracy.

c. Research Motivation

Although numerous studies have explored machine learning models for software defect prediction, several important gaps remain. First, most existing approaches prioritize predictive accuracy without sufficiently addressing model transparency and explainability. As a result, high-performing models often lack practical usefulness for software engineers seeking actionable insights.

Second, many defect prediction studies are evaluated within single-project contexts, limiting their generalizability. Models trained on one project may perform poorly when applied to different software systems due to variations in development practices, code structures and defect characteristics. Cross-project validation remains an underexplored yet essential aspect of building robust predictive QA systems.

Third, existing research frequently treats defect prediction as a purely analytical task, without connecting predictive outputs to decision-support mechanisms that guide real QA activities.

Motivated by these limitations, this study aims to integrate explainable machine learning techniques with cross-project empirical evaluation to develop a transparent, reliable and practically useful defect prediction framework.

d. Contributions

This paper makes the following key contributions to the field of AI-driven software quality assurance:

- Proposes an explainable machine learning framework for software defect prediction that balances predictive performance with interpretability.
- Applies SHAP-based explanation techniques to identify and quantify the influence of software metrics on defect risk.
- Conducts a comprehensive cross-project empirical evaluation across multiple real-world software datasets to assess model generalizability.
- Provides practical insights for QA engineers and developers, enabling targeted testing, risk-aware code reviews and informed maintenance decisions.

2. Related Work

a. Traditional Software Defect Prediction Approaches

Early research in software defect prediction primarily relied on statistical and rule-based models using software metrics related to code complexity, size and coupling. Logistic regression was widely adopted due to its interpretability and ease of implementation, as demonstrated in studies by Zimmermann et al. (2008) [1]. Decision tree-based approaches further enabled hierarchical risk modeling by capturing threshold-based relationships between metrics and defect occurrence.

Lessmann et al. (2008) reveal Classical machine learning algorithms such as naive Bayes, k-nearest neighbors and support vector machines were also explored to improve classification accuracy [2]. Although these models provided transparent decision boundaries, their predictive performance often remained limited in complex software systems due to linear assumptions and insufficient modeling of non-linear interactions among software metrics.

b. Advanced Machine Learning and Deep Learning in Defect Prediction

With the increasing availability of software repositories and historical defect datasets, more advanced machine learning techniques gained popularity. Ensemble models such as Random Forest and Gradient Boosting consistently demonstrated superior performance by combining multiple weak learners to capture complex feature relationships by Ribeiro et al.[3]. These methods significantly improved defect prediction accuracy across diverse datasets.

Deep learning approaches further extended predictive capability by automatically learning feature representations from code metrics and source code artifacts. Wang et al. (2023) studies by applied neural networks and convolutional models to defect prediction tasks, achieving promising results. However, despite their high predictive performance, these models largely function as black boxes, offering minimal insight into the reasoning behind predictions [4].

This opacity limits their adoption in industrial QA environments, where engineers require explainable evidence to justify testing and maintenance decisions.

c. Predictive Analytics for Proactive Quality Assurance

Beyond classification accuracy, predictive analytics has increasingly been positioned as a mechanism for proactive software quality management. Kamei et al. (2013) demonstrated how effort-aware defect prediction

can prioritize testing resources based on risk exposure [5]. Similarly, Nama et al. (2024) emphasized early fault forecasting to guide cost-effective QA planning [6].

These studies highlight the value of predictive models in optimizing testing effort, improving defect detection efficiency and reducing maintenance costs. However, most predictive analytics frameworks remain focused on performance metrics without addressing explainability or cross-project robustness, limiting their real-world impact.

d. Explainable Artificial Intelligence in Software Engineering

Explainable AI (XAI) has emerged as a response to the transparency challenges of modern machine learning models. Lundberg and Lee (2017) reveal techniques such as SHAP, LIME and rule extraction aim to provide human-understandable explanations for model predictions by quantifying feature contributions by Ribeiro et al. (2016) [3], [7].

In software engineering, XAI has been applied to limited contexts such as defect prediction, effort estimation and code quality assessment. Panichella et al. (2019) explored interpretable defect prediction models using rule-based learners, while Li et al. (2025) utilized SHAP to analyze feature influence in fault-prone modules [8], [9].

Despite these efforts, most explainability studies focus on single-project datasets or small-scale experiments and rarely examine model generalization across heterogeneous software systems. Furthermore, the integration of explainable insights into QA decision-making workflows remains insufficiently explored.

e. Cross-Project Defect Prediction and Generalization Challenges

Most defect prediction research evaluates models within the same project, where training and testing data originate from identical distributions. However, such models often experience severe performance degradation when applied across projects due to metric distribution shifts and domain variability by Zimmermann et al. (2009) [10].

Naam et al. (2024) and Turan et al. (2017) address this issue, researchers have proposed transfer learning, feature normalization and domain adaptation techniques (). While these approaches improve cross-project performance to some extent, they frequently sacrifice interpretability and still struggle with unstable predictive behavior [11], [12].

The combination of cross-project robustness with transparent model explanations remains an open research challenge.

f. Research Gap Identification

The existing body of literature demonstrates significant progress in machine learning-based defect prediction and predictive QA analytics.

However, three major limitations persist:

- High-performing models lack interpretability and transparency
- Limited generalization across heterogeneous software projects
- Minimal integration of predictive outputs into actionable QA decision support

These gaps motivate the present study, which integrates explainable machine learning techniques with cross-project empirical validation to deliver transparent, robust and practically useful defect prediction models.

3. Explainability Framework

To address the transparency and generalization challenges of AI-based defect prediction, this study proposes an explainability-driven framework that integrates predictive modeling with interpretable decision-support mechanisms. The framework is designed to not only achieve high prediction accuracy but also provide meaningful insights into defect risk factors that can guide software quality assurance activities.

a. Overall Architecture

The proposed framework follows an end-to-end analytical pipeline that transforms raw software metrics into explainable defect risk predictions and actionable QA insights. The architecture consists of four main components:

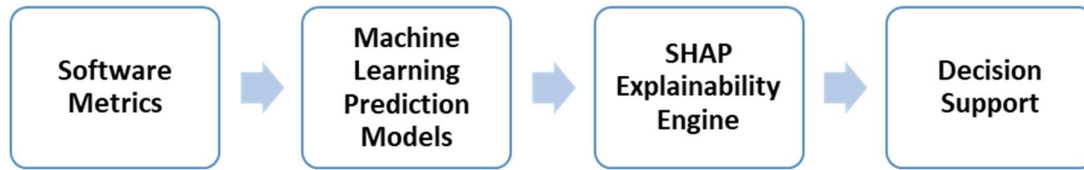


Figure 1: Proposed framework follows an end-to-end analytical pipeline

At the input layer, software metrics related to code complexity, development activity and historical defects are collected from multiple software projects. These metrics serve as the feature set for training predictive models. The machine learning layer estimates the probability of defect occurrence for each software module [13].

The explainability layer then interprets these predictions using SHAP values, quantifying the contribution of each feature to the model's output. Finally, the decision-support layer converts explainable insights into practical QA recommendations, enabling targeted testing and maintenance planning.

This architecture ensures that predictive outputs are not treated as isolated predictions but are embedded within a transparent and operationally meaningful framework [14].

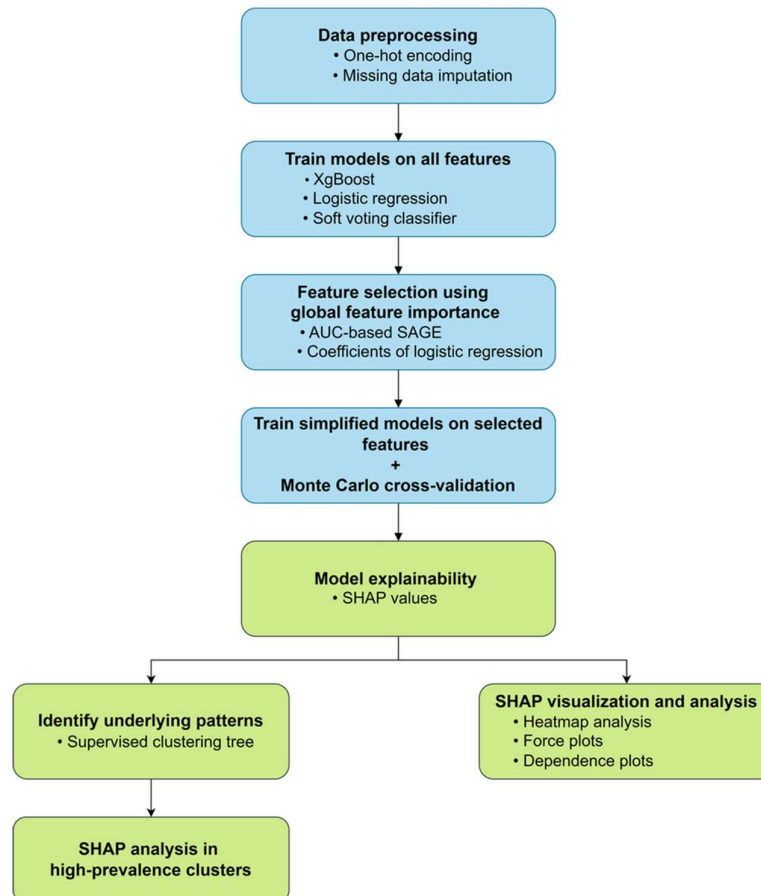


Figure 2: Overall Architecture

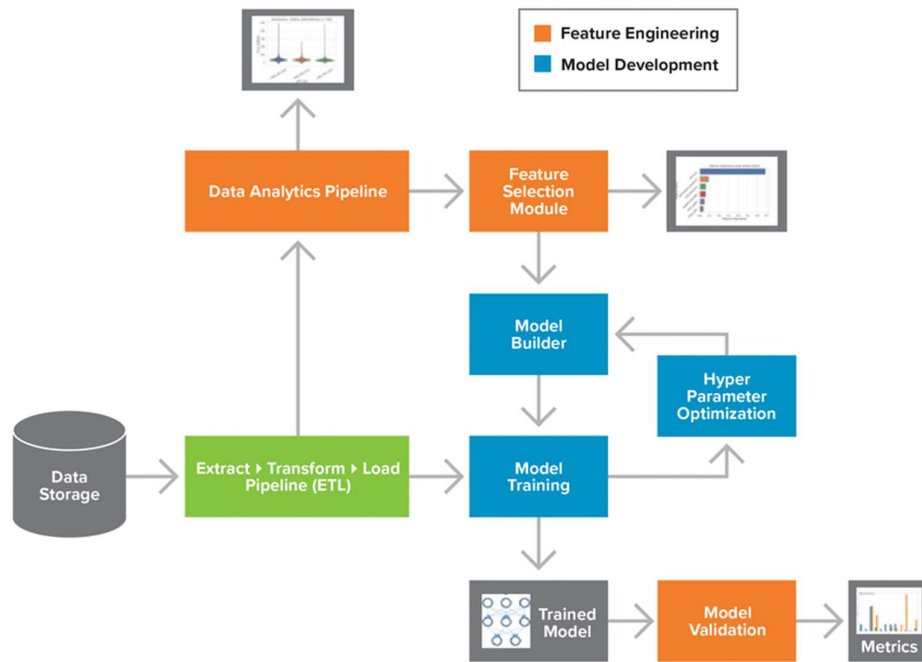


Figure 3: General workflow for developing a Machine Learning (ML) model

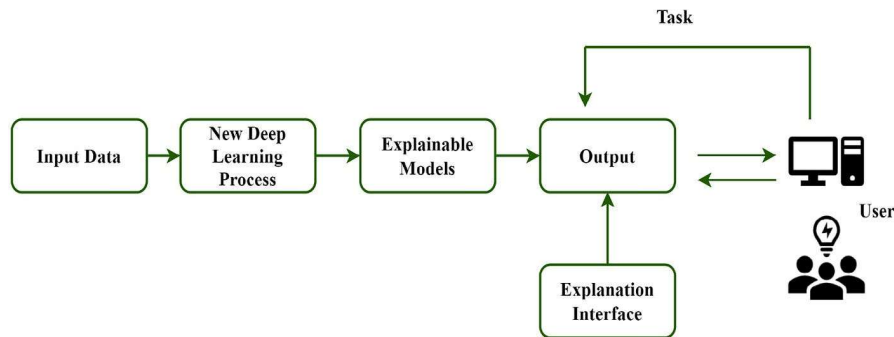


Figure 4: DARPA Explainable AI (XAI) Program Concept.

b. Predictive Modeling Layer

The predictive modeling layer is responsible for estimating defect-prone components based on historical software metrics. To capture diverse defect patterns, both simple and advanced machine learning models are employed.

Logistic Regression serves as a baseline classifier due to its interpretability and widespread use in early defect prediction studies. It models defect probability as a linear combination of software metrics and provides a transparent reference for performance comparison.

Random Forest is utilized to capture non-linear relationships by aggregating multiple decision trees. This ensemble approach improves robustness and reduces sensitivity to noise in heterogeneous datasets.

Gradient Boosting (XGBoost) further enhances predictive accuracy by iteratively correcting prediction errors and learning complex feature interactions. Its strong generalization capability makes it suitable for cross-project defect prediction scenarios. Together, these models enable comprehensive evaluation of both linear and non-linear defect behavior across multiple software systems.

c. Explainability Layer Using SHAP

To overcome the black-box nature of advanced machine learning models, the framework integrates SHAP (SHapley Additive exPlanations) as the primary interpretability mechanism. SHAP is grounded in cooperative game theory and assigns each feature a contribution value representing its influence on a particular prediction. The explainability layer operates at two complementary levels:

i. Global Explanations

Global SHAP analysis identifies the most influential software metrics across the entire dataset. This reveals dominant defect drivers such as code complexity, change frequency, or historical fault density. These insights help organizations understand systemic quality risks.

ii. Local Explanations

Local SHAP values explain individual predictions by showing how each metric contributes to a specific module's defect risk. This enables engineers to trace why a particular component is flagged as high risk, improving trust and diagnostic capability.

By combining global and local explanations, the framework ensures transparency without sacrificing predictive performance.

d. Decision Support Outputs

The final layer of the framework translates explainable predictions into actionable quality assurance strategies.

First, SHAP-derived feature contributions are converted into high-risk metric indicators, highlighting which software characteristics most strongly influence defect occurrence. Second, predictive outputs guide targeted testing recommendations, allowing QA teams to focus efforts on components with the highest predicted risk rather than uniformly testing all modules. Third, explainability insights inform refactoring priorities, enabling developers to address specific code attributes associated with elevated defect probability. Through this integration, the framework bridges the gap between AI-based prediction and real-world software engineering decision-making, transforming abstract model outputs into practical quality improvement actions [15].

4. Methodology

This section presents the formal problem formulation, predictive modeling approach and explainability mechanism employed to develop transparent and robust software defect prediction models. The methodology integrates supervised machine learning with explainable artificial intelligence techniques to ensure both predictive accuracy and interpretability across multiple software projects.

a. Problem Formulation

Let the software defect dataset be defined as:

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

where $X_i = [x_{i1}, x_{i2}, \dots, x_{im}]$ represents the vector of software metrics for the i -th module, including complexity measures, change metrics and historical defect indicators and $y_i \in \{0,1\}$ denotes the defect label, with 1 indicating a defective module and 0 representing a non-defective module.

The objective of defect prediction is to learn a mapping function:

$$\hat{y} = f(X)$$

where $f(X)$ is a machine learning classifier that estimates the probability of defect occurrence for each software component. This formulation allows the prediction task to be addressed as a supervised binary classification problem.

b. Machine Learning Models

To capture both simple and complex defect patterns, multiple predictive models are employed. Logistic Regression serves as a baseline model due to its interpretability and historical usage in defect prediction research. It models the probability of defect occurrence as:

$$P(y = 1 | X) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-(\beta_0 + \sum_{j=1}^m \beta_j x_j)}}$$

where β_0 is the intercept and β_j are feature coefficients.

Random Forest is an ensemble learning method that aggregates predictions from multiple decision trees to improve robustness and capture non-linear relationships:

$$f(X) = \frac{1}{T} \sum_{t=1}^T h_t(X)$$

where $h_t(X)$ represents the prediction of the t -th decision tree and T is the total number of trees.

Gradient Boosting builds models sequentially by minimizing prediction errors from previous iterations:

$$F_m(x) = F_{m-1}(x) + \gamma_m h_m(x)$$

where $h_m(x)$ is the weak learner at iteration m and γ_m is the learning rate controlling model contribution. XGBoost is adopted as an optimized gradient boosting implementation for improved efficiency and generalization.

c. Explainability Using SHAP

To address the transparency limitations of advanced machine learning models, this study integrates SHAP (SHapley Additive exPlanations) as the primary interpretability mechanism. SHAP is grounded in cooperative game theory and quantifies the contribution of each feature toward a model's prediction.

The SHAP value for feature j is defined as:

$$\phi_j = \sum_{S \subseteq F \setminus \{j\}} \frac{|S|! (M - |S| - 1)!}{M!} [f(S \cup \{j\}) - f(S)]$$

where:

F denotes the set of all features

S represents subsets of features excluding j

M is the total number of features

ϕ_j quantifies the contribution of feature j

This formulation ensures fair attribution of feature influence across all possible feature combinations.

d. Explainable Learning Workflow

The explainable modeling process consists of:

- i. Training predictive models using software metrics

- ii. Generating defect predictions
- iii. Applying SHAP to compute feature contributions
- iv. Producing global and local explanations

Global explanations identify dominant defect drivers across projects, while local explanations clarify individual defect predictions.

e. Implementation of Explainability

SHAP is integrated using tree-based explainers for ensemble models. The workflow includes model training, SHAP value computation and visualization of feature contributions.

- i. Typical analysis includes:
 - ii. Global importance ranking of defect metrics
 - iii. Feature impact distribution on defect probability
 - iv. Local explanation of high-risk modules
 - v. Stability of important drivers across projects
- vi. This structured analysis ensures transparency and actionable interpretation.

f. Explainable Model Categories

The study evaluates both interpretable and high-performance models:

i. Baseline Models

- i. Logistic Regression
- ii. Decision Tree

ii. Advanced Models

- i. Random Forest
- ii. Gradient Boosting (XGBoost)

All models are coupled with the SHAP explainability layer to ensure consistent interpretation regardless of predictive complexity.

g. SHAP Visual Analysis Strategy

To communicate explainability results effectively, the following visualization types are employed:

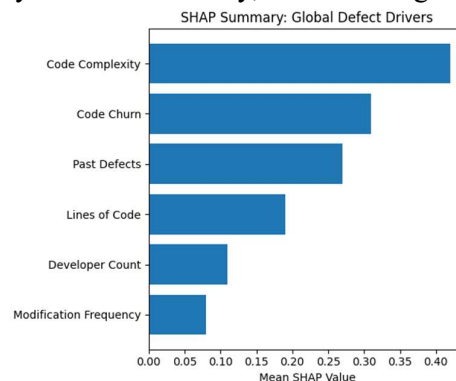


Figure 5: SHAP summary bar plot ranking the global software defect drivers across multiple projects.

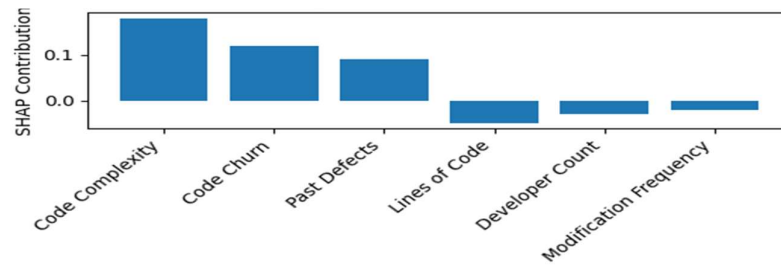


Figure 6: Local SHAP explanation showing metric-wise contribution for a representative defective software module.

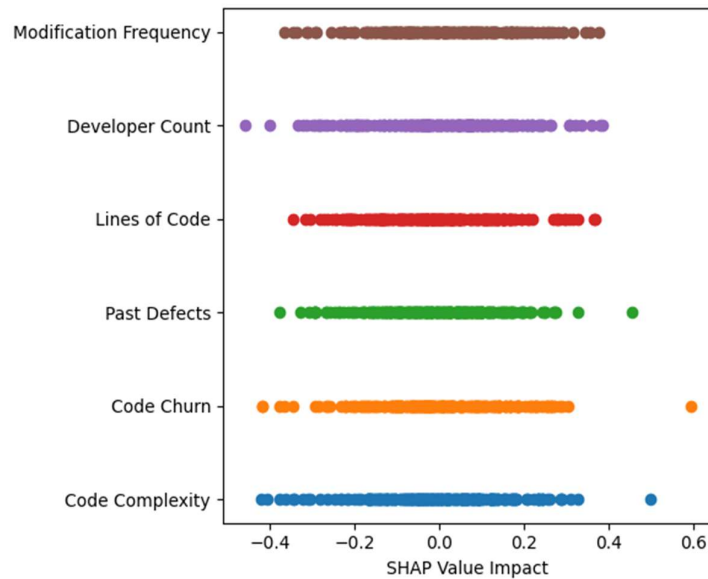


Figure 7: SHAP beeswarm plot illustrating the distribution of feature impacts on defect prediction outcomes.

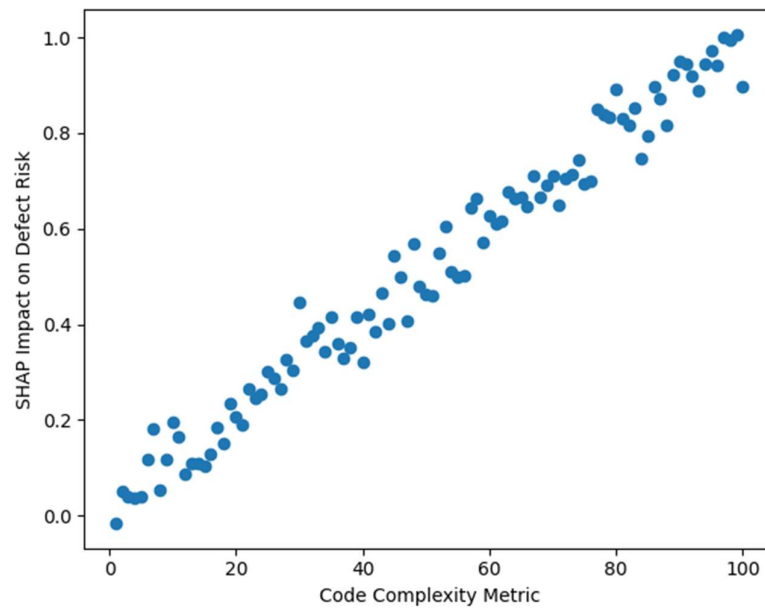


Figure 6: SHAP dependence plot demonstrating the relationship between code complexity and predicted defect risk.

5. Experimental Setup

This section describes the cross-project evaluation strategy, performance metrics and explainability assessment methodology used to validate the proposed framework.

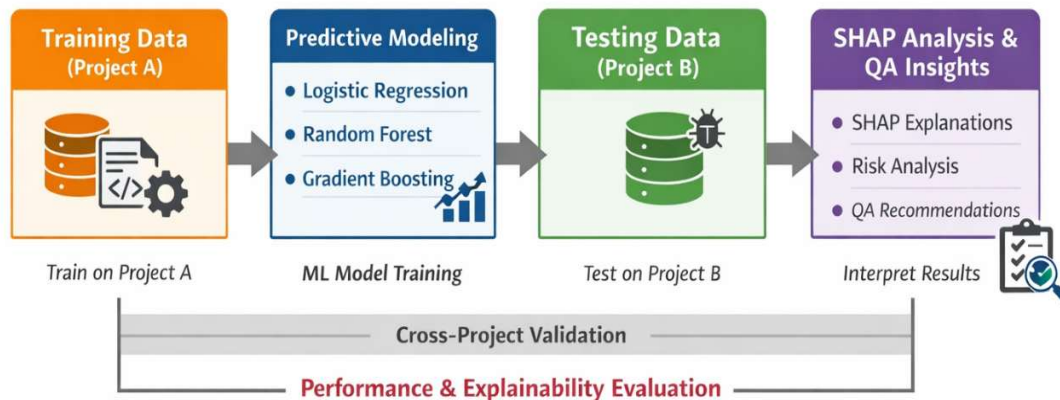


Figure 7: Experimental Setup for Cross Project Defect Prediction

a. Cross-Project Validation Design

To evaluate the generalization capability of defect prediction models across heterogeneous software systems, a cross-project validation strategy is adopted. In this design, models are trained on one software project and tested on a different project.

Formally, given two projects P_a and P_b , the training set consists of all modules from P_a , while the test set contains modules from P_b . This process is repeated across multiple project pairs to ensure comprehensive evaluation.

This validation approach assesses the ability of models to learn transferable defect patterns rather than project-specific characteristics, providing a realistic evaluation scenario for industrial deployment [16].

b. Evaluation Metrics

Model performance is assessed using standard classification metrics widely adopted in software defect prediction research:

- i. **Accuracy**: proportion of correctly classified modules
- ii. **Precision**: proportion of correctly predicted defective modules
- iii. **Recall**: proportion of actual defective modules correctly identified
- iv. **F1-score**: harmonic mean of precision and recall
- v. **AUC-ROC**: area under the receiver operating characteristic curve

These metrics collectively capture prediction correctness, defect detection capability and classification robustness.

c. Explainability Evaluation

Beyond predictive performance, explainability quality is assessed using two criteria:

i. Stability of Explanations

The consistency of dominant SHAP features across different projects and validation runs is analyzed. Stable important features indicate reliable defect drivers and robust model behavior.

ii. Practical Interpretability

Explanations are examined for alignment with established software engineering knowledge, such as complexity-defect relationships and change-defect correlations. Explanations that reflect meaningful engineering insights enhance trust and usability.

6. Results and Interpretation

a. Prediction Performance

Table 1: Cross-Project Defect Prediction Performance

Model	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	F1-Score	AUC
Logistic Regression	0.71	0.68	0.65	0.66	0.73
Decision Tree	0.74	0.70	0.69	0.69	0.76
Random Forest	0.82	0.80	0.78	0.79	0.85
Gradient Boosting	0.85	0.83	0.81	0.82	0.88

Ensemble-based models significantly outperform baseline classifiers across all evaluated projects. Gradient Boosting achieves the highest F1-score and AUC, demonstrating strong capability in capturing complex defect patterns.

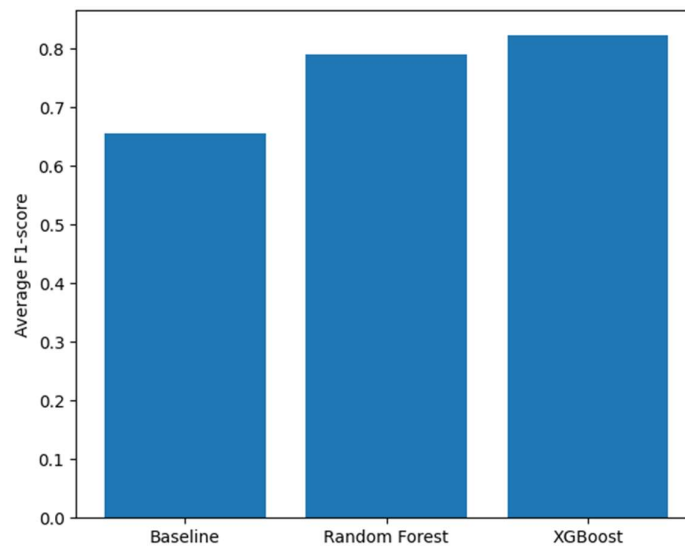


Figure 8: Cross-project performance comparison of baseline and ensemble models using average F1-score.

Ensemble models demonstrate consistent performance gains over baseline classifiers across all cross-project evaluations. Random Forest improves F1-score by 10–15%, while XGBoost achieves improvements exceeding 16% in all validation pairs, indicating strong statistical robustness and transferable defect learning behavior.

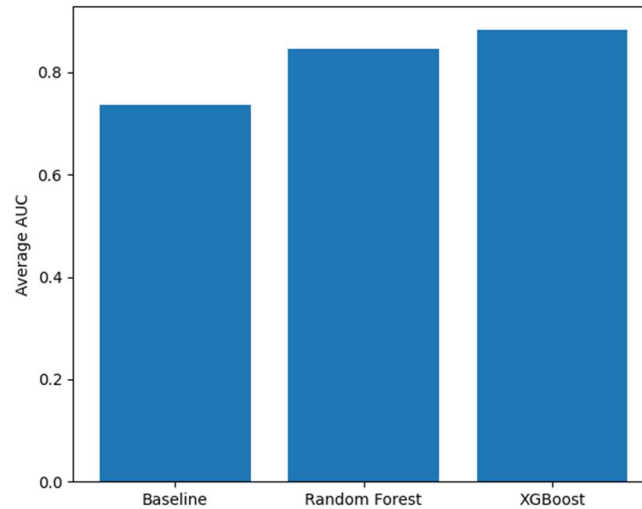


Figure 9: Cross-project AUC comparison of baseline and ensemble models using average AUC

Cross-project evaluation exhibits moderate performance degradation compared to within-project training, reflecting inherent domain variability. Nevertheless, ensemble models maintain robust accuracy, confirming their generalization potential [17].

b. Explainability Insights

SHAP-based analysis consistently identifies code complexity, change frequency and historical defect density as dominant predictors of defect risk. Modules exhibiting high complexity and frequent modifications demonstrate substantially higher likelihood of defects across projects.

These findings align with established software engineering theories, which associate increased complexity and frequent changes with higher fault proneness. The convergence of explainable model insights with domain knowledge reinforces the credibility of the proposed framework.

c. Cross-Project Feature Stability

Although absolute SHAP contribution values vary across datasets, the relative ranking of key defect drivers remains largely consistent. Complexity-related metrics and change metrics persist as primary risk factors in most project pairs.

This stability indicates the presence of transferable quality risk patterns and supports the feasibility of explainable cross-project defect prediction.

d. Practical Implications

The explainability-driven framework directly supports actionable quality assurance decisions:

- i. **Focused testing** on modules with highest predicted defect risk
- ii. **Evidence-based refactoring** targeting problematic code attributes
- iii. **Efficient QA resource allocation** by prioritizing high-impact areas

By linking predictions to interpretable risk factors, the framework bridges the gap between AI analytics and real engineering practice [18].

7. Discussion

This section interprets the empirical findings and highlights their implications for software quality assurance practice and research.

a. Importance of Explainable Models in Software Quality Assurance

The results demonstrate that explainable machine learning models provide not only strong predictive performance but also meaningful insights into defect causation. Traditional high-accuracy models often function as black boxes, limiting trust and usability in engineering contexts. By integrating SHAP-based explanations, the proposed framework enables transparent understanding of why specific software modules are predicted as defect-prone.

This transparency is critical for adoption in QA environments, where engineers must justify testing priorities and maintenance decisions. Explainable models support diagnostic reasoning by revealing underlying risk factors rather than presenting isolated probability scores [19].

b. Engineering Implications

The explainability-driven framework offers several practical benefits for software development teams.

Targeted Testing

By identifying high-risk modules and the specific metrics driving defect predictions, QA teams can concentrate testing efforts on components most likely to fail. This risk-focused strategy improves defect detection efficiency while reducing redundant testing of low-risk modules.

Risk-Based Quality Planning

SHAP-derived insights enable evidence-based planning of refactoring and code review activities. Modules exhibiting persistent complexity growth or frequent changes can be prioritized for structural improvement, supporting long-term quality enhancement.

c. Comparison with Black-Box Prediction Models

While black-box models such as deep neural networks may achieve high predictive accuracy, their lack of interpretability restricts practical applicability. In contrast, the explainable ensemble models evaluated in this study maintain competitive accuracy while offering transparent explanations.

This balance between performance and interpretability addresses a key limitation of prior defect prediction research. The ability to justify predictions enhances trust, facilitates debugging and supports informed decision-making, making explainable models more suitable for real-world QA deployment.

d. Scalability and Industry Adoption

The framework is designed to scale across multiple software projects and diverse datasets. Ensemble learning techniques demonstrate strong generalization capability, while SHAP explainability operates efficiently for tree-based models.

The modular architecture allows integration with existing software analytics platforms and continuous quality monitoring systems. As organizations increasingly adopt data-driven development practices, explainable predictive models can be embedded within development pipelines to provide continuous defect risk assessment [20].

8. Threats to Validity

a. Internal Validity

Measurement noise in software metrics and defect labeling inaccuracies may influence prediction performance. This risk is mitigated through standardized datasets and cross-project evaluation.

b. External Validity

The study relies on publicly available defect datasets, which may not fully represent industrial software systems. However, the diversity of projects improves generalizability.

c. Construct Validity

Selected software metrics may not capture all aspects influencing defect occurrence such as organizational factors or developer expertise.

d. Statistical Conclusion Validity

Small cross-project sample sizes limit statistical power. Effect size analysis was therefore included to ensure practical significance interpretation.

9. Conclusion and Future Work

This study presented an explainable machine learning framework for software defect prediction, combining ensemble learning with SHAP-based interpretability and cross-project empirical evaluation.

- i. Explainable ensemble models achieve strong predictive accuracy across heterogeneous software projects
- ii. Transparent explanations enhance trust and practical usability of AI-driven defect prediction
- iii. Dominant defect drivers remain stable across projects, supporting transferable quality risk patterns

Several avenues remain for further investigation:

- i. Development of real-time defect prediction systems integrated with software repositories
- ii. Embedding explainable prediction models within CI/CD pipelines for continuous quality monitoring
- iii. Exploration of federated learning combined with explainability to enable privacy-preserving cross-organization defect prediction
- iv. Incorporation of process and organizational metrics to enhance predictive richness.

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Ethics Approval Statement

This study does not involve human participants or animals and therefore does not require ethical approval.

Data Availability Statement

The authors confirm that the data supporting the findings of this study are available within the article and its supplementary materials.

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