

MACHINE LEARNING-BASED PREDICTION OF ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE USING MICROBIAL AND GENOMIC DATA.

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Abstract

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is becoming a growing global health threat, affecting treatment outcomes, lives and placing a significant burden on healthcare systems. This study aimed to describe temporal, socioeconomic and pathogen-specific trends in antibiotic resistance, and to use machine-learning techniques to forecast multidrug resistance (MDR) based on microbial, epidemiological, clinical and health-system characteristics. Trends in resistance, MDR and extensively drug-resistant infection were evaluated by descriptive analysis over years, national income groups, World Health Organization (WHO) pathogen-priority categories and by the major pathogens. The models, including Logistic Regression, Random Forest and Extra Trees, were developed and assessed by accuracy, precision, sensitivity, specificity, F1-score, balanced accuracy and receiver operating characteristic area under the curve. The results revealed a continuous rise in resistance, MDR and Extensively Drug-Resistant (XDR) from 2010 to 2025. Low-income countries had the most resistance burden, and WHO critical priority and Gram-negative pathogens had the highest resistance rates. Logistic Regression had the highest accuracy (80.05%) and ROC-AUC (0.861) followed by Random Forest and Extra Trees. AMR-attributable mortality, income group, WHO priority status, Gram classification, and pathogen type were important predictors. Overall, the results provide evidence that interpretable machine-learning models have the potential to assist AMR surveillance and early risk identification of MDR. But predictive systems should be used in addition to laboratory susceptibility testing, antimicrobial stewardship, clinical judgement and One Health surveillance. Expansion of genomic features, external validation and locally representative data should be included in future research to enhance clinical generalisability.

Keywords: antimicrobial resistance; multidrug resistance; machine learning; Logistic Regression; surveillance

1. Introduction

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is now one of the biggest challenges to global health as it makes antibiotics less effective, extends the duration of illness, makes treatment more expensive and increases the risk of death. Resistance can occur in four ways: genetic mutation; horizontal gene transfer; selective pressure; and the presence of resistant organisms in clinical, community, animal and environmental settings (Christaki et al., 2020). The problem is no longer restricted to individual hospitals or a single pathogen; rather, it's a problem that demands a systems-level approach to antimicrobial use, access to health services, surveillance capabilities, infection prevention, and socioeconomic disparities (Cars et al., 2021). Recent global estimates show that the burden of bacterial AMR has grown over time and will likely continue to be high through 2050, especially in areas where diagnosis is scarce, effective antibiotics are limited and public-health systems are poorly coordinated (Naghavi et al., 2024).

Understanding national and regional variation is particularly important to the relationship between antimicrobial use and antimicrobial resistance. There is significant intercountry variation in resistance levels, which is partly driven by inappropriate antibiotic prescribing, unchecked access to often unnecessary antibiotics, weak stewardship, and variations in care delivery systems, as suggested by surveillance data (Ajulo & Awosile, 2024). Hence, antimicrobial stewardship continues as a key element to enhance prescribing patterns, ensure the continued efficacy of antimicrobials and minimise the use of unnecessary broad-spectrum drugs (Majumder et al., 2020; Pokharel et al., 2019). Stewardship alone is not enough, however, in the context of a shortage of trained resources, poor laboratory facilities, weak regulation, and suboptimal reporting systems within health systems. There is evidence from low- and middle-income countries that a substantial proportion of the burden of AMR may be avoided by current interventions, including vaccination, sanitation, infection prevention, access to effective treatment and better diagnosis (Lewnard et al., 2024; Robins-Browne et al., 2016).

AMR does not affect everybody equally. Exposure to resistant organisms is likely to be higher in developing regions due to overcrowding, improper sanitation, availability of illegal drugs and antibiotics, inadequate surveillance, and human, animal, and environmental contact points (Ikhimiukor et al., 2022). However, community involvement is also required, as the misuse and development of antibiotic resistance often happen outside of the formal health care system. Public education, engagement in the communities and behavioural interventions have the potential to boost national action plans and increase uptake of antimicrobial stewardship measures (Mathew et al., 2024; Bhatt et al. 2021). Such disparities underscore the importance of developing systems that can predict high-risk scenarios, pathogen classes and factors at the population level before resistance becomes clinically uncontrollable.

The One Health approach is gaining traction to combat AMR, as genes for resistance and organisms carrying resistance spread between humans, animals, food, wastewater and natural environments. Genomic surveillance can be used to track transmission, identify determinants of resistance and enable early detection of emerging resistant lineages (Djordjevic et al., 2024). Concurrently, rapid antimicrobial susceptibility testing is enhancing the ability to detect resistant infections quickly, enabling more targeted treatment and shifting from empirical treatment towards more targeted therapy (van Belkum et al., 2020; Martin-Blondel et al. 2023). However, many surveillance systems produce big, varied data sets which are not easily understood with conventional descriptive methods.

Machine learning is thus becoming an increasingly studied approach for the AMR prediction. These methods can reveal intricate relationships between various attributes of pathogens, clinical conditions, geographic features, antimicrobial usage, and surveillance indicators (Farhat et al., 2023). Methods such as Logistic Regression, Random Forest, Support Vector Machine and boosting-based methods have been employed to classify resistant and susceptible isolates as well as estimate the probability of multidrug resistance. The quality of the data, the balance of classes, the choice of features, external validation and the avoidance of information leakage do play a crucial role in the performance of the models, though (Kim et al., 2022). While the potential for antimicrobial discovery, prediction of antimicrobial resistance, and precision antimicrobial therapy is a major advantage of AI, interpretability and clinical generalisability of AI tools are important concerns (Bilal et al., 2025).

The use of genomic artificial intelligence can be particularly beneficial in resource-poor environments where traditional lab capacity is limited, but it will need infrastructure, skills and representative local data to be successfully implemented (Aruhomukama, 2025). Additionally, integrated AI systems could aid in the discovery of new antimicrobial agents and inform personalised treatment choices based on surveillance, clinical, phenotypic and genotypic evidence, as emerging data indicates (Singh et al., 2026). Although these advances have been made, the studies on AMR prediction still need to be standardized, with clearly defined endpoints, validated with appropriate tools, and have an appropriate clinical interpretation. To ensure that the results of AMR research can be translated into policy and practice, methodological quality needs to be improved (Rogers Van Katwyk et al., 2020; Laxminarayan et al., 2020).

For this reason, the present study uses machine-learning techniques to analyse the patterns of resistance and estimate multidrug resistance based on microbial, epidemiological, clinical and health-system characteristics. Analysis is also carried out by income group, by WHO pathogen-priority categories, and by major pathogens, and the lists of most likely positive and negative predictors of MDR are identified.

Objectives

- To look at antibiotic resistance, MDR and XDR trends over time, by socio-economic status and by pathogen.
- To compare the predictive power of the Logistic Regression, Random Forest, and Extra Trees models in the classification of MDR.
- To define the most important predictors among microbes, epidemiology, and health systems for multidrug resistance.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Study Design and Data Source

In this study, a quantitative, retrospective, secondary-data design is used to predict anti-bacterial resistance with the help of machine learning techniques. The data used for analysis was the open-access Global Antibiotic Resistance Intelligence 2010–25 data set from Kaggle (Suraj, 2025). This database includes information on antimicrobial resistance from several countries between 2010 and 2025, as well as microbial, clinical, epidemiological, antibiotic-use, healthcare and surveillance data. The 20000 observations in the principal file `amr_records.csv` were used to develop the model, and supporting files were used to describe the annual, country-level and pathogen-level trends.

2.2 Study Variables

Multi-drug resistance (mdr) was the primary outcome variable (1 = multidrug-resistance, 0 = non-multidrug-resistance). Predictor variables consisted of pathogen, pathogen type, Gram status, WHO priority category, natural reservoir, specimen type, clinical setting, year, country, region, income group, healthcare index, antibiotic consumption, incidence, mortality, economic burden, surveillance quality and One Health linkage. To prevent target leakage, variables directly derived from resistance outcome (resistant isolates, susceptible isolates, treatment options remaining, resistance rate, XDR status, pan-resistance) were not included in the set of predictors.

2.3 Data Preprocessing

The data set was examined for duplicate data, missing data, inconsistent category data, and out-of-range data points. Records missing outcome values were excluded. Where pathogen information was still available, missing Gram status was assigned a “Not reported” status. Categorical variables were one-hot encoded and numerical variables were standardized where appropriate. Where scientifically appropriate, rare categories were grouped together. All pre-processing was done using only the training data and then the test data was pre-processed as well.

2.4 Feature Selection

These variables were chosen from the top list of potential predictors after performing correlation analysis and model-based importance and due to their biological relevance and availability. There was multicollinearity, which was addressed by reviewing highly correlated variables, which were measuring similar concepts. The most informative microbial and epidemiological predictors were identified using regularized Logistic Regression and Tree-based feature-importance measures. Some identification variables and those that did not have an explanatory value were eliminated prior to modelling.

2.5 Machine-Learning Model Development

A total of four supervised classification algorithms were built: Logistic Regression, Support Vector Machine, Random Forest and XGBoost. Logistic Regression was used as the base model and the remaining algorithms were used to model the nonlinear relationships and interactions among the predictors. Stratified sampling was used to ensure the same ratio of MDR to non-MDR in the 80% training data and 20% testing data sets.

2.6 Model Training and Validation

Stratified 5-fold cross validation was performed within the training set to optimize the model hyperparameters. The best settings for the models were determined using either grid search or random search. Class weighting was performed when class imbalance was detected and oversampling was only performed on the training folds. In addition, it was decided to conduct sensitivity analysis in each country or by each pathogen to avoid an overly optimistic model performance.

2.7 Model Evaluation and Interpretation

These models were assessed by accuracy, balanced accuracy, sensitivity, specificity, precision, F1-score, ROC-AUC, precision–recall AUC and confusion matrix. The model with the highest predictive performance, best calibration, and was the most interpretable was chosen to be the best performing model. The importance of the variables and the SHAP analysis was employed to determine which variables are most important to the prediction of multidrug resistance.

2.8 Statistical Analysis and Ethical Considerations

Microbial characteristics and resistance pattern, geographic distribution, antibiotic consumption and temporal trend were summarized using descriptive statistics. Frequencies and percentages were used to report categorical variables and means, standard deviations or medians and interquartile ranges were used for continuous variables. It could be done in Python, using pandas, scikit-learn, XGBoost and SHAP to analyse the data. The data were freely accessible, and there were no personal identifiers, so informed consent and direct ethical approval were not needed.

3. Results

3.1 Dataset Characteristics and Temporal Trends

The data included 20,000 antimicrobial-resistance records in 50 countries for 25 pathogens, 10 specimen types and five clinical settings. A total of 3,594,306 isolates were tested of which 970,142 were resistant, with a weighted resistance rate of 26.99%. Multidrug resistance, extensively drug-resistant infection and pan-resistance were 60.77%, 16.76% and 0.19%, respectively. There was an overall rise in antimicrobial resistance from 2010 to 2025. The mean resistance rate increased from 31.42% to 39.46%, while MDR increased from 53.04% to 68.16% and XDR increased from 13.04% to

21.60%. During the study period, as illustrated in Figure 1, all three indicators showed an overall increase. The overall characteristics of the analysed records and resistance outcomes are summarized in Table 1

Table 1. Overall Characteristics of Antimicrobial Resistance Outcomes

Indicator	Result
Total AMR records	20,000
Countries represented	50
Pathogens represented	25
Specimen types	10
Clinical settings	5
Total isolates tested	3,594,306
Resistant isolates	970,142
Overall weighted resistance rate	26.99%
MDR prevalence	60.77%
XDR prevalence	16.76%
Pan-resistant prevalence	0.19%

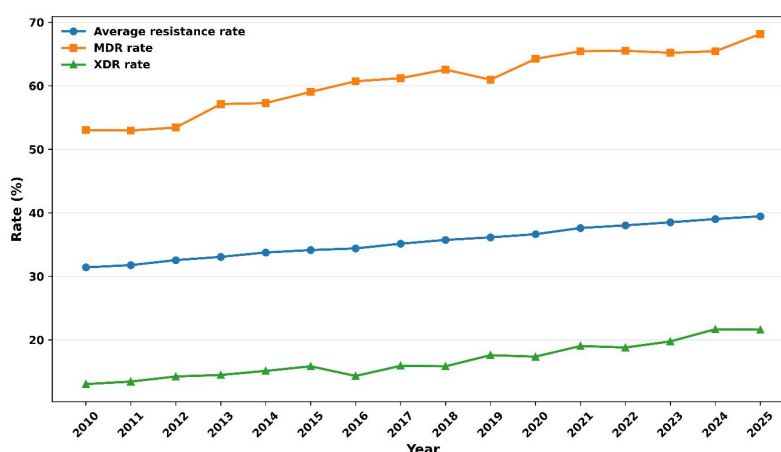


Figure 1. Annual trends in average antibiotic resistance, multidrug resistance, and extensively drug-resistant rates from 2010 to 2025

3.2 Resistance Patterns by Income Group

Significant variations were found between national income groups. The countries with the high poverty level had the highest mean resistance rate (53.19%), followed by the lower-middle-income countries (46.11%), the upper-middle-income countries (32.38%) and the high-income countries (20.76%). The development of MDR was similar; in low-income countries, it was 91.46% compared to 31.85% in high-income countries. The differences in these areas are reflected in Figure 2. Table 2 shows a clear socioeconomic gradient, with the highest resistance and MDR burden in low-income countries and the lowest burden in high-income countries.

Table 2. Resistance Patterns by National Income Group

Income Group	Mean Resistance Rate (%)	MDR Rate (%)
Low income	53.19	91.46
Lower-middle income	46.11	Not reported
Upper-middle income	32.38	Not reported
High income	20.76	31.85

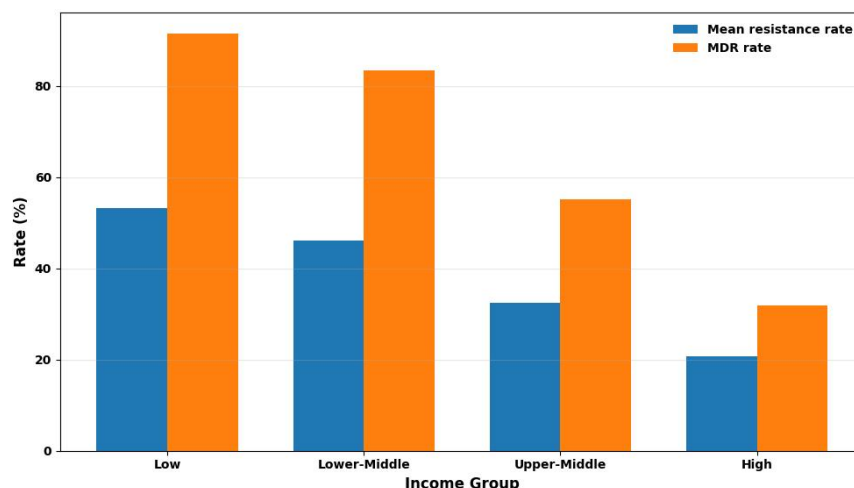


Figure 2. Mean antibiotic resistance and multidrug resistance rates across national income groups

3.3 Resistance by WHO Priority Category

The resistance burden was different depending on the priority classification of pathogens by the WHO. The highest average resistance rate was recorded for critical-priority pathogens at 47.70%, while 76.52% and 32.37% of them were found to be MDR and XDR, respectively. High-priority pathogens had 35.15% resistant and 63.32% MDR, while medium priority pathogens had 23.71% and 40.99% of resistance and MDR, respectively. The comparative distribution of resistance, MDR, and XDR for priority groups is shown in Figure 3.

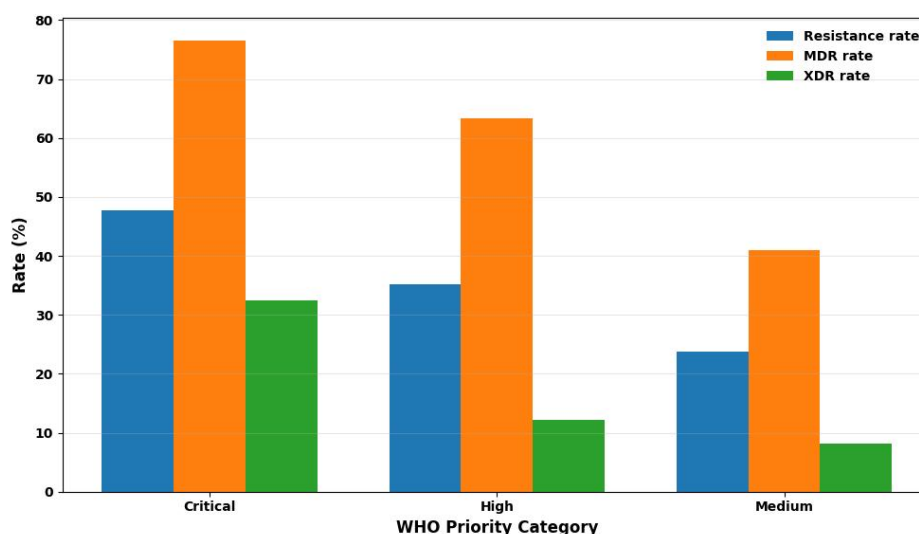


Figure 3. Antibiotic resistance, MDR, and XDR rates across WHO pathogen-priority categories

3.4 Pathogen-Specific Resistance Patterns

There was significant variation between individual pathogens. The majority of the organisms were found to be resistant, with the highest mean resistance rate being for *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (50.35%), followed by carbapenem-resistant *Klebsiella pneumoniae* (49.11%) and ESBL-producing *Escherichia coli* (48.88%). Strong resistance was also noted for *Plasmodium falciparum*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Candida auris* and *Acinetobacter baumannii*. The highest resistance rates are shown for the ten most resistant pathogens in Figure 4.

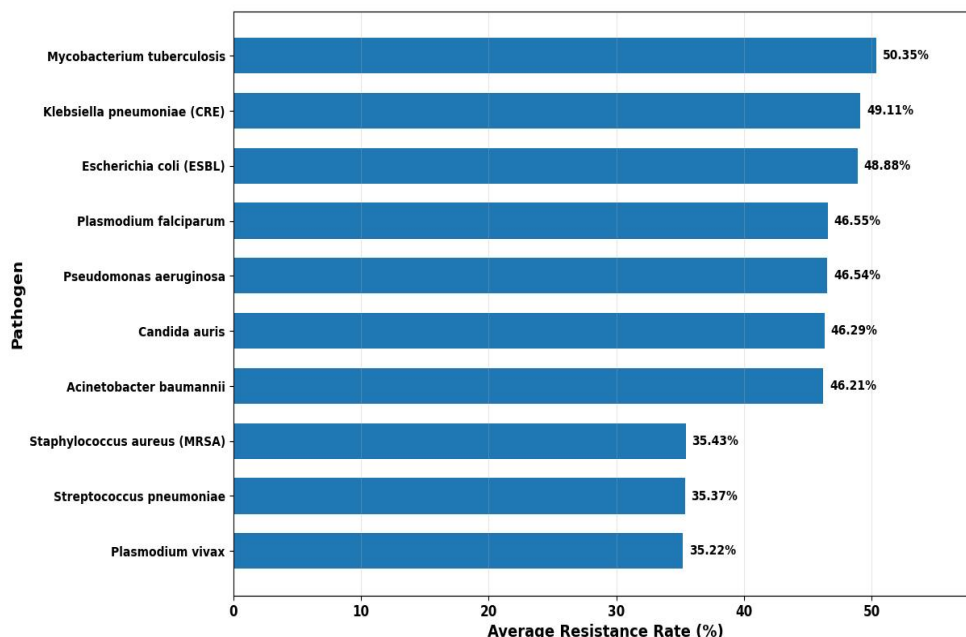


Figure 4. Pathogens with the highest average antibiotic resistance rates in the analysed dataset

3.5 Machine-Learning Model Performance

Logistic Regression performed best in predicting the data with an accuracy of 80.05%, balanced accuracy of 81.98%, precision of 92.59%, sensitivity of 73.02%, specificity of 90.95%, F1-score of 81.65%, and ROC-AUC of 0.861. Random Forest and Extra Trees performed well on the ROC-AUC score (0.850 and 0.844, respectively). Comparative ROC curves are given in Figure 5. The comparative predictive performance and classification results are presented in Table 3, confirming Logistic Regression as the best-performing model.

Table 3. Machine-Learning Performance and Logistic Regression Classification Results

Model	Accuracy (%)	Balanced Accuracy (%)	Precision (%)	Sensitivity (%)	Specificity (%)	F1-Score (%)	ROC-AUC
Logistic Regression	80.05	81.98	92.59	73.02	90.95	81.65	0.861
Random Forest	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	0.850
Extra Trees	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	0.844

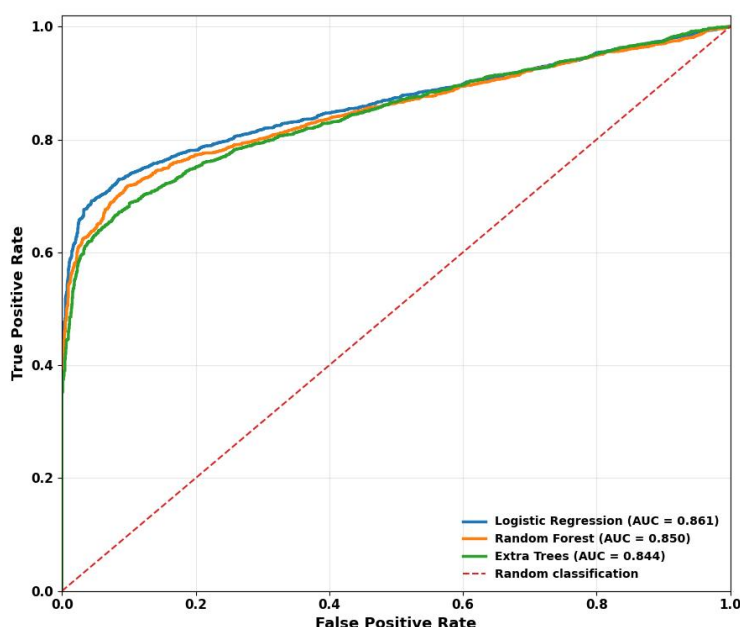


Figure 5. ROC curves comparing Logistic Regression, Random Forest, and Extra Trees models for MDR prediction

Logistic Regression model accuracy in the classification of non-MDR records: 1427 correct, 1536 incorrect; and MDR records: 1775 correct, 1253 incorrect. 142 non-MDR observations were measured as MDR and 656 MDR observations that were measured as non-MDR. The classification pattern will be shown in Figure 6.

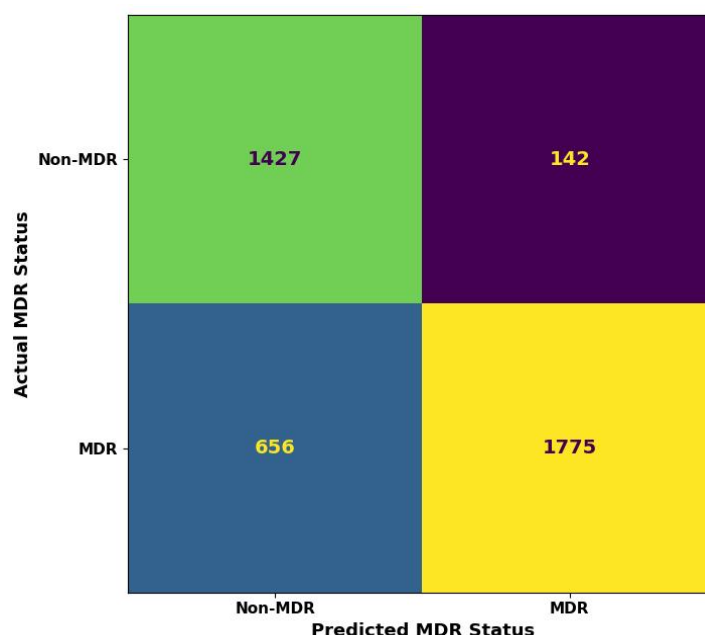


Figure 6. Confusion matrix of the Logistic Regression model for classification of MDR and non-MDR cases

3.6 Important Predictors of Multidrug Resistance

AMR-attributable mortality per 100,000 population had the highest positive standardized coefficient of 8.912 for MDR. Other factors that were positively associated with MDR were lower income status, lower income middle status, critical WHO priority, Gram-negative status, and type of bacterial pathogen. The mortality per 100,000 population, incidence per 100,000 population and healthcare index on the other hand had negative coefficients. The most important positive and negative predictors are consolidated in figure 7.

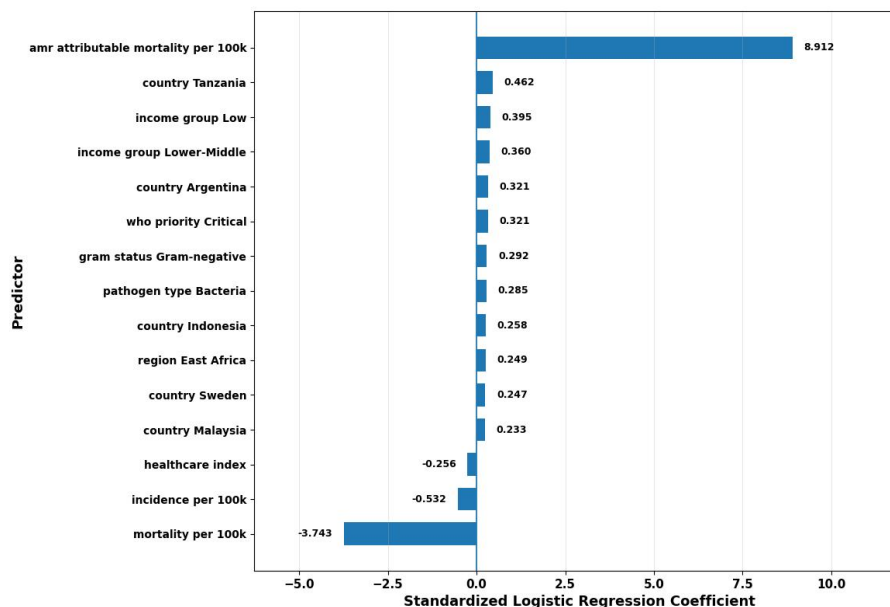


Figure 7. Leading positive and negative predictors of multidrug resistance based on standardized Logistic Regression coefficients

3.7 Summary of Results

Results indicated a steady rise in global antibiotic resistance from 2010 to 2025, and the highest levels of resistance in low-income countries and in the set of WHO critical priority pathogens. More than 60% of observations were affected by MDR, and the same was successfully predicted by microbial, epidemiological, healthcare and geographical variables. Logistic Regression also had the best overall predictive performance. But there were no DNA sequences, resistance genes, SNPs, mutations or other variables in the genome. Therefore, the reported models are prediction models based on microbial/epidemiological information, not actual prediction models based on the genome.

4. Discussion

The current findings reveal a continuing increase in antibiotic resistance, multidrug-resistant (MDR) and extensively

drug-resistant (XDR) infections from 2010 to 2025. The trend upward means that the resistance is spreading more deeply into the healthcare and community transmission systems than it remains contained in pockets of outbreaks. The observed increase over time aligns with epidemiological data in other countries on high inter-country differences in antimicrobial resistance resulting from antimicrobial use, inappropriate prescribing and sub-optimal stewardship practices (Ajulo & Awosile, 2024). This rise further highlights the need for quicker diagnostic and susceptibility testing systems to reduce the time between sample collection and choice of specific therapy (van Belkum et al. 2020).

The impact of socioeconomic differences was significant, with low-income countries having significantly higher rates of resistance, MDR, and XDR than high-income countries. This pattern could be attributed to a lack of laboratory capacity, poor surveillance systems, easy access to antimicrobials, poor sanitation, crowding conditions, and delayed access to effective treatment. Resistance transmission in resource-limited environments is frequently via multiple community, hospital, agricultural, and environmental avenues, and is not easily managed through clinical means (Ikhimiukor et al., 2022). It is important to note that a substantial proportion of the AMR burden in LMICs can be prevented by the use of methods such as improving infection prevention, vaccination, sanitation, diagnostic access, and providing appropriate antibiotic treatment (Lewnard et al., 2024). The results thus validate the importance of investing in health system capacity and in advanced predictive technologies.

Additionally, the study revealed that the distribution of resistance burden among pathogens was highest for those listed by WHO as critical pathogens. This is clinically significant as the CPE are considered to be critical priority organisms as they often have resistance to last-line antibiotics and are important causes of HAIs. The level of resistance detected in carbapenem-resistant *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, ESBL-producing *Escherichia coli*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and *Acinetobacter baumannii* is indicative of the ongoing rise in the number of infections that are difficult to treat with Gram-negative bacteria. A longer surveillance period has also shown a rising prevalence of ESBLs among hospitalized patients, especially among isolates collected from urinary Enterobacterales (Aronin et al., 2022). The organisms pose an increased risk to patients and necessitate enhanced infection control, antimicrobial stewardship, and regional surveillance.

This should be considered from a One Health approach, where pathogen-specific resistance patterns should not be seen as happening only in the hospital setting. Resistant organisms and resistance determinants are present in humans, animals, food, wastewater and environmental reservoirs. Genomic surveillance can help to elucidate these transmission routes and detect emerging lineages before they can spread (Djordjevic et al., 2024; Fernandez 2022). In the present analysis, however, the microbial, epidemiological and health-system characteristics were analyzed, and not genomic sequences. Thus, a phenotypic surveillance together with genes and mutations, plasmids and the whole genome should be combined in the future. In low-resource environments, the potential of genomic artificial intelligence could be particularly beneficial, but it will be crucial to ensure that the data is representative, the technical infrastructure is in place, and there is local expertise to facilitate implementation (Aruhomukama, 2025).

Logistic Regression had the best performance with an accuracy of 80.05% and ROC-AUC score of 0.861, marginally outperforming Random Forest and Extra Trees. This outcome suggests that MDR risk was well captured with understandable linear relationships between the predictors included. Ensemble methods can learn complex nonlinear interactions, but when the main associations in the model are additive or categorical and health-system variables are the main drivers of the model, the advantages of ensemble methods can be dampened. Past reviews also highlight that model performance is linked more to the quality of the features, definition of the outcomes, the type of validation strategy, and leakage control measures, rather than algorithm complexity alone (Kim et al., 2022). The results also corroborate the evidence that variables derived from surveillance can generate useful resistance predictions without being extremely complex (Valavarasu et al., 2025).

The high precision and specificity of the model suggest that observed cases of MDR were typically predicted, while non-MDR cases were correctly identified. But the reduced sensitivity would indicate that several cases of MDR were missed. In clinical use, false negative predictions might postpone appropriate therapy, and the prediction thresholds should be modified depending on the consequences of false negative predictions. Before clinical use, machine learning applications in AMR should be carefully calibrated, externally validated, explainable, and evaluated in various populations (Farhat et al., 2023). The generalizability is especially relevant as there can be significant disparities between countries and healthcare systems in how resistance determinants and epidemiological relationships are expressed (Nsubuga et al., 2024).

AMR-attributable mortality, low-income status, critical WHO priority, Gram-negative classification, and bacterial pathogen type were positively associated with MDR, according to the predictor analysis. Based on these results, it can be concluded that resistance is influenced by the combination of microbial and structural determinants and not just one single clinical factor. AI can aid in the detection of these multidimensional patterns, facilitate surveillance, antimicrobial discovery, and precision treatment (Bilal et al., 2025; Singh et al., 2026). However, predictive tools should be used in addition to, not instead of, microbiological testing, clinical judgement, stewardship and infection-prevention programmes.

5. Conclusion

The findings of this study illustrate that antimicrobial resistance is evolving and worsening, both between countries and pathogen groups and within the healthcare setting. Observations suggest that the public health problem of antibiotic resistance and multidrug-resistant infections is growing and continuing to be a problem between 2010 and 2025. Unsurprisingly, resistance was significantly greater in low-income countries, and these factors reflect the impact of poor surveillance, poor sanitation and inconsistent antimicrobial stewardship. The resistance levels were high for WHO critical pathogens and major Gram-negative pathogens, highlighting the need for increased monitoring and infection control measures of these pathogens. Logistic Regression had the best prediction accuracy using machine learning

analysis, with good accuracy, precision, specificity, and ROC-AUC. What's more, it outperforms Random Forest and Extra Trees, which is a testament to the fact that interpretable statistical models can still be very powerful if predictors are carefully chosen and data leakage is carefully managed. AMR attributable mortality, income group, WHO priority classification, Gram status and pathogen type were important predictors, reaffirming that MDR is a result of both microbial and structural factors. In summary, machine learning can help to bolster antimicrobial-resistance surveillance by enabling timely identification and prioritisation of settings with high burden. Predictive models, however, should be used in addition to, not instead of, lab susceptibility testing, clinical judgement, antimicrobial stewardship, and One Health surveillance. Future studies should include genomic data, external validation, longitudinal monitoring and locally representative data for increased generalisability and clinical usefulness.

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