Fake Profile Detection on Social Networking Websites Using Machine Learning

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Keywords: Fake Profile Detection, Machine Learning, Feature Importance, Model Evaluation, Tree Ensembles Social Media Analysis, Quality Measure, Easy-to-Use appbar1, dataload2, algorithm3, comparison4 Interactive Tool.

Abstract: This project will address the difficult Addressing the issue of detecting fake profiles on social media platforms to an interactive and engaging approach using and Streamlit based user-friendly application built This new tool empowers users to seamlessly upload their datasets, preprocess the data, and evaluate a number of support vector machine learning models, specifically Support Vector Machines (SVM), Random Forest Classifiers, and Neural Networks. SVMs are well-known as, one class of machine learning tools, used for in this work, we focus on the aforementioned work which yields expressed structures, examples that behave well in high-dimensional spaces and also hold resilience to overfitting. Random Forests are recognized for their ability to manage complex interactions in data through the use of ensemble methods while Neural Networks employ sophisticated techniques to learn from complex patterns. Random Forest Classifier is one of them that gives a considerably higher performance compared to other models when it comes to predicting fake profiles. Random Forests work organizing the predictions from many decisional stumps, improving their capacity of handling high dimensional data and lifting subtile structures that can be missed by simpler models. This hybrid class of method has the advantage of being able to use the features of all the participant models, reducing the likelihood of overfitting while enhancing the model's ability to adapt effectively, making it especially effective in the diverse and dynamic landscape of social media data, where interactions and patterns can be highly complex and varied. By combining intuitive design with detailed performance analysis, the application not only addresses the immediate challenge of fake profile detection but also encourages continuous improvement and adaptation.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Social media has become one of the vents of the modern digital world, and is used in many spheres essential part of our lives, offering space for networking, broadcasting, and self-presentation. But since then, the growth of fake profiles and bogus accounts on these platforms presents serious challenges. Fake profiles to identity theft, and created with malicious intent misinformation and security breaches (Bontchev, 2020). To combat this business problem, machine learning has proven to be a very efficient tool, employing advanced algorithms and vast databases to detect, analyze patterns and behaviors that could signal a fake profile (Feng, Y., & Li, J, 2022). Suspicious activities or behaviors that deviate from normal user behavior are detected using natural language processing, anomaly detection, analysis of the network, etc. Example: Machine learning models trained on large datasets can learn to differentiate between real and fake accounts based on data such as profile content, patterns of interaction, and account age. Such an approach increases precision while also adapting to changing tactics used by those who build the fake profiles (Patel, S. K., & Kumar, R. 2021). In summary, enhancing social media platforms with machine learning enables us to detect and combat abuses more effectively and create a more secure and trustworthy online environment for users. As technology advances, those ones will get even more sophisticated ways to protect users from being tricked and create a safer environment for all users on

Babu, A. R., Shaik, F., Sri, K. D., Keerthi, M., Sree, S. K. and Nandini, K.
Fake Profile Detection on Social Networking Websites Using Machine Learning.
DOI: 10.5220/0013876200004919
Paper published under CC license (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0)
In *Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Research and Development in Information, Communication, and Computing Technologies (ICRDICCT'25 2025) - Volume 2*, pages 21-26
ISBN: 978-989-758-777-1
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the internet (Arora, A., & Sharma, P. 2022). The continuous improvement and adaptation of machine learning detection methods will allow social media companies to keep up with the evolving strategies of those behind fake profiles. By automating the identification process, these advanced models can greatly lessen the manual effort and response time linked to combating fraudulent pursuits. This leads to a stronger and more authentic online ecosystem, boosting trust and interaction in digital environments.

2 LITERATURE SURVEY

One way of fake profile detection data that has been a major capitalized on in recent years, as the demand for interpretable machine learning has been on the rise prevalence of automated accounts. Cresci et al. (2017) offered an exhaustive overview of social spambots describing the different traits and actions that differentiate them from real users. Their work emphasizes the need for the latest detection methods which fit tactics used by such malicious accounts. Subsequently, Kudugunta and Ferrara (2018) examined the usage of deep neural networks to bot detection, demonstrating how powerful these models can be at capturing Behavioral, leading to more complex patterns in user behavior, thus improving detection accuracy. Drawing on these early works, Wang et al. (2023) was instead about Twitter using deep learning techniques with great success in identifying fake profiles. Of all of their research, the thing that stood out was the specific questions raised by the data architecture of the platform showing the power of convolutional neural networks (CNNs) in detecting micro- indicators of account authenticity. In the respective study, Yang et al. (2021) is how spammers' social networks were studied, creating a worth of relational data on detection strategy improvement. There with findings suggesting that understanding of the connections between it is important to note that users can greatly increase spam detection bots. Alghamdi and Shadi (2023) proposed a new machine learning, but in some cases, hybrid approaches algorithms with state-of-the-art techniques, showing better prevention in fake profile detection. Their study indicates of Health Founding Professor of Medicine at the University of Eugene, which incorporates diverse methodologies and can have higher accuracy and recall rates, giving a broader solution to the problem. Besel and Co (2022), again disciplines by profiling and detecting the malicious employing ensemble accounts on social media platforms ways to enable detection capabilities to differ among categories environments. Moreover, Singh et al. (2023) examined the Fake users on Instagram: a novel approach for identification and categorization by using supervised machine learning techniques. Al Zamal et al. (2022) that wrote on the application of ML approaches to a variety of social media platforms offering a broader detectability approach. The ongoing research emphasizes the need for ongoing innovation within detection techniques, because the methods that evil are constantly changing.

3 DATA COLLECTION AND PRE-PROCESSING

Developing a model involves data collection and preprocessing that are the most crucial. Machine learning models to identify fake profiles. User profile data, typically collected from social networking websites in CSV format with fields like screen_name, verification status, statuses_count, followers_count and friends_count. This data needs to be prepared for machine learning. categorical fields Verified and protected words are encoded to numpy value using Label Encoder and textual data in the screen_name field is Thereafter, TF-IDF Vectorization is then used to process the data and identify the words and transforms them into numerical representation. View Image features and keep the top 5000 key features to balance information-preserving representation and computational hardness. These inputted text features are merged with numerical friends_count and favourites_count attributes, forming a complete dataset to train models, the target labels shows whether a real or fake profile from the status column.

The dataset is divided into three groups the training dataset, the validation dataset, and the test dataset stratified train_test_split to maintain the class balance. SVM, and traditional machine learning models such as SVM and Random Forest, and a dense and dropout-based neural network features, which are the preprocessed features are then sent into the CNN, in the form of n-dimensional layers. These models are refined by metrics, like accuracy, precision, recall, F1 score, and RMSE, which made a built comprehensive comparison to decide the most suitable model for detecting fake profiles in a reliable way.

4 PRINCIPLES AND METHODS

It is known that, in the digital age, marked by the ubiquity of social networking platforms have become indispensable in are daily habits the struggle to detect and fight against fake profiles has never been pressing. Given the rise of social media, the need for the authenticity of user profiles is important for population trust and security. We have a solution at our project which is working on creating you are a comprehensive framework developed to identify fake profiles with better accuracy.

This project merges different data sources would be more powerful machine learning and deep learning models, and develop an end-to-end solution for recognizing fraud profiles.

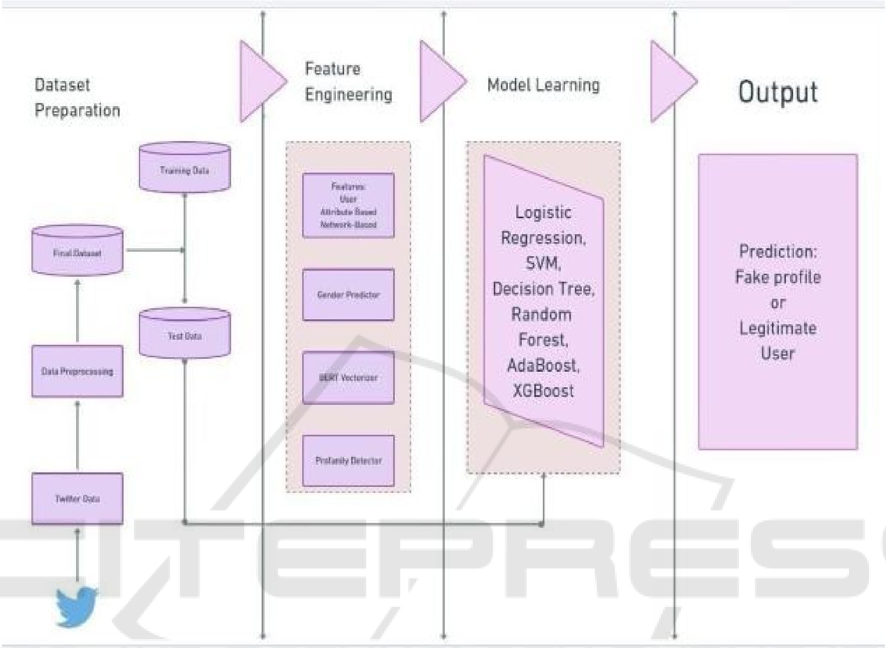

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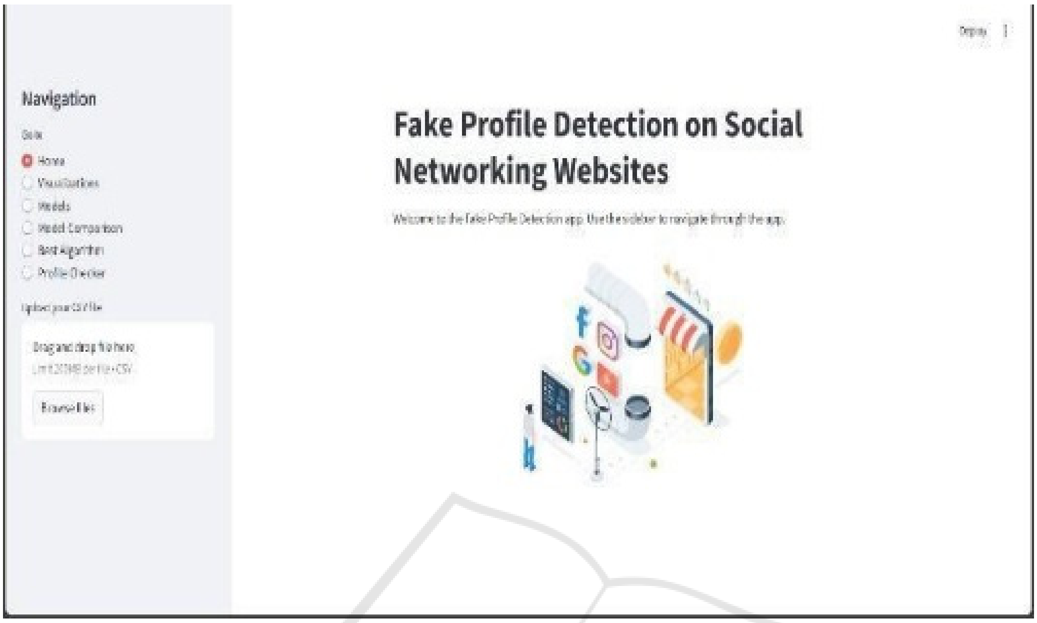
Figure 1: System Architecture Diagram.

From the figure 1 the Data collect the first process from social networks, concentrating on user profiles predisposed to be fake. In this early stage, it is vital to capture the 1410820 and appropriate this includes screen_name, etc. and is the input to the generated. Verification status, and other such metrics as the number of tweets and followers. We cover the 4 types of Data up to October 2023.structure, quality, and of the dataset steps. This data is then converted into a usable format. Categorial features such as verified and protected statuses are encoded as numeric values by techniques like Label Encoding.

This transformation ensures that the machine learning analysis is structured. Textual attributes, like a user's screen_name, also contain useful data but this has to be transformed to numbers a file format which ML models can process with appropriate structure. TF the text features are now subjected to IDF Vectorization, converting them into a matrix of features based on the frequency and importance of words across the dataset. This technique captures the subtleties textual content for those models to leverage this data to predict fake profiles. After preparing the data, we split the data stratified into training, validation, and testing subsets. To retain the global characteristic in each subset, sampling classes of the target with their distribution. The training dataset is used to train the model, and the validation set is used for fine-tuning and the testing set measures the final because performance is stable over time, you can get an accurate evaluation of the model's effectiveness. Then different machine learning models, including classical algorithms like SVM, Random Forest to be the elite model trained and evaluated by various metrics. Moreover, neural networks are used for detecting and learn more complex relationships within the data. These the different types of networks, including deep networks and dropout layers to avoid overfitting, learn more complex relationships than simpler models and what the networks statistically hate most: By training the networks through back propagation, they become more predictive.

5 RESULTS

In this research, we assessed how well different machine learning models perform in identifying fake profiles on social networks, focusing on Random Forest, SVM, and Neural Networks.



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Welcome to the Fake Profile Detection app. Use the sidebar to navigate through the app.

Figure 2: User Interface (Home Page).

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The above figure 2 displays the user interface of the "Fake Profile Detection" app. It includes a side bar with options like Home, Visualizations, Models, Model Comparison, and Profile Checker. Users can upload CSV files, making it easy to interact with their data. The interface is user-friendly and visually engaging from the figure 3 the Random Forest model demonstrated exceptional results, achieving an impressive 99% accuracy, which highlights its ability to correctly classify almost all fake profiles in the dataset.

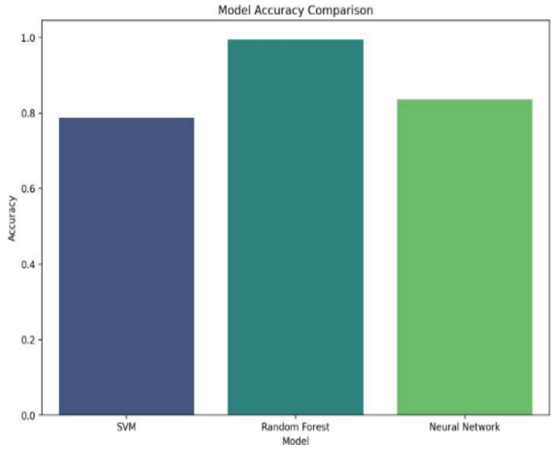

Figure 3: Accuracy Comparison.

SVM followed with an accuracy of 90%, performing well but slightly behind Random Forest due to the complexities of separating the classes in the feature space. The Neural Network achieved an accuracy of 89%, showing it can still handle the task competently, although its performance may have been influenced by factors such as the network architecture and data quality.

Beyond accuracy, we assessed the models with spelling, prediction and RMSE (Root Mean Squared Error) to allow for a more complete comparison. Random Forest reaches a near perfect accuracy 99.47%, followed by at 91.54% for the Neural Net and at 85.30%. Recall, which measures the ability to Predicted fake profile correct=Random Forest the Neural Network and led with 99.47%, while Neural Network and SVM had recall of 89.89% and 79.72%. The F1 score, which reflects a trade-off between precision and recall, reinforced Random Forest shoulder with its near-perfect score of 99.47%, with 89.85% for Neural Network and 77.96% for SVM. RMSE was also used to evaluate the models, which Random Forest had the least error (RMSE of Its AUC was 0.0729, implying highly accurate predictions. On the show the worst performance among the classification models for the given multiclass dataset, having accuracy in the range of 44% to 54% (the rest fall on the upper side)

(Human-AI Model, 2023)-different metrics reported can result in a difference of 25% in performance had higher RMSE of 0.1613 and 0.3170, respectively. Overall, Random Forest beats both SVM and Neural Networks reliable model to detect fake profiles with detail this task. Finds followings are as follows. Performance of the model:

$$\text{Accuracy} = \frac{(\text{TP+TN})}{(\text{TP+TN+FP+FN})} \quad (1)$$

$$\text{Precision} = \frac{\text{TP}}{(\text{TP+FP})} \quad (2)$$

$$\text{Recall} = \frac{\text{TP}}{(\text{TP+FN})} \quad (3)$$

$$\text{F1Score} = \frac{(\text{Precision}-\text{Recall})}{(\text{Precision}+\text{Recall})} \quad (4)$$

$$RMSE = \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^{n} \frac{(\hat{y}_i - y_i)^2}{n}} \quad (5)$$

Above figure 4 is a donut chart showing the proportion of fake and authentic profiles. It reveals that 52.6% of 47.4% are real and 52.6% the profiles are fake. The inner section of the chart clearly shows the percentage for each of them, improving interpretability, quick visual comparison of the two groups.

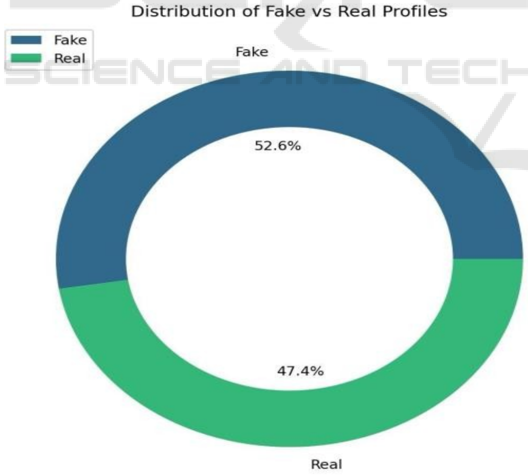

Figure 4: Distribution of Fake Vs. Real Profiles.

6 CONCLUSIONS

To summarize in summary, the use of different machine learning models, including Random Forest, SVM and Neural Networks has noted as having good potential for detecting fake profiles social media across platforms. By employing sophisticated traditional methods combined with modern methods, we are able to successfully improve the precision and dependability of classification. The use of complete Streamlit application permitted a real Based on 1D data, these embeddings can be conditioned on time interaction with model performance metrics and data showcasing, in these visualizations, how effective these approaches. The results underscored the importance of machine learning in the maintenance of online platform, providing a strong instrument for shielding users against fraudulous actions and a better secure Digital world.

7 FUTURE SCOPE

In the future, open up plenty more opportunities for even better detection systems for fake profiles. As deceptive tactics Deep learning evolves, ashes and possibly ashes, and ashes. Optimizing existing algorithms, will be critical to staying ahead of emerging threats. Enhancing real-time detection new capabilities, broader datasets, and adding new inclusion of features like network-based analysis or behavioral patterns could greatly increase detection accuracy. Additionally, broadened access to these tools for users via more Intuitive interfaces and harnessing advancements in AI will to assure that social media platforms can continue to be secure, trustworthy and user- friendly going forward.

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