### MITA CAPSTONE PROJECT

# **Boston House Price Prediction**

# RUTGERS THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

**Program: Masters in Information Technology And Analytics** 

Semester – Spring 2021

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### 1. Introduction:

### 1.1 Context

This Capstone Project has been done as part of Masters in Information Technology and Analytics at Rutgers Business School, Newark and mentored by Prof. Michail Xyntarakis. The Project was completed in the duration of three months including deciding project topic, research, learning, development and reporting.

### 1.2 Motivation

The project represent the interest in the field of Machine Learning, Data analytics and Visualization. The skills gained in the curriculum over the past semesters have been applied practically which helped in enhancing the existing theoretical knowledge.

### 1.3 Idea

Residing in Boston currently, this topic immensely interested me to know better about the city and its residential facts. Also, when the project was completed I was able to verify the results in the real world scenario which is accurate to great extent.

# 1.4 Objective

The main objective is to evaluate the performance of various models used and predict the price of the houses in the suburbs of Boston, Massachusetts. The project is created in two parts using Machine Learning Algorithms in Python (Jupyter Notebook) and through Tableau Visualizations. In the initial part of the project, models trained and tested on the dataset can be seen as a good fit and thus could be used to make predictions about the monetary value of the houses. In the later part, various charts and representations have been used to get a better idea of various factors that effect the house price in Boston. When an individual plans to buy a house he considers various aspects like price, the number of rooms, the distance from major locations, educational institutes, crime rate, other residents in that area etc. Here, multiple factors are used to predict the price of the house. This model and visualizations can be very useful to individuals who are new to the city and want to explore/buy a house.

### 2. Dataset

# 2.1 Getting the dataset

The Dataset obtained is the corrected version of original Boston dataset. This is the updated dataset and contains the Harrison and Rubinfield data corrected for minor errors in the latitude and longitude. Also, the town column has been added in the dataset. The corrected dataset was in a txt format and had to be converted to xlsx format.

ons.	TOWN TOWN#	TRACT	LON LAT	MEDV CME	DV CRIM	ZN	INDUS	CHAS	NOX	RM	AGE	DIS	RAD	TAX	PTRATIO	n	LSTAT			
3	Nahant 0	2011	-70.955000	42.255000	24.0	24.0	0.00632		2.31	0	0.538	6.575	65.2	4.0900	FIRMITE	296	15.3	396.90	4.98	
2	Swampscott	1			287500	21.6	21.6	9.92731		7.97	0.550	0.469	6.421	78.9	4.9671		242	17.8		9.14
3	Swampscott	ĩ			283000	34.7	34.7	0.02729		7.97	0	9,469	7,185	61.1	4,9671	2	242	17.8		4.93
4	Marblehead	9			293000	33.4	33.4	0.03237		2.18	0	0.458	6.998	45.8	6.0622	3	222	18.7		2.94
5	Marblehead	5			298000	36.2	36.2	0.06905		2.18	0	0,458	7,147	54.2	6.0622	3	222	18.7		5.33
6	Machlehead	2			304000	28.7	28.7	0.02985		2.18	0	0.458	6.430	58.7		3	222	18.7		5.21
7	Salem 3	2041	-70,936000	42,297000	22.9	22.9	0.08829		7.87	0	0.524	6.012	66.6	5.5605	5	311	15.2	395,60	12.43	
rs.	Salem 3	2042	-70.937500	42.310000	27.1	22.1	0.14455	12.5	7.87	0	0.524	6.172	96.1	5.9505	5	311	15.2	396.90	19.15	
9	Salem 3	2043	-70.933000	42.312000	16.5	16.5	0.21124	12.5	7.87	0	0.524	5.631	100.0	6.0821	5	311	15.2	386.63	29.93	
10	Salem 3	2044	-70,929000	42,316000	18.9	18.9	0.17004	12.5	7.87	0	0.524	6,004	85.9	6.5921	5	311	15.2	386,71	17,10	
1.1	Salem 3	2045	-70.935000	42,316000	15.0	15.0	0.22489	12.5	7.87	0	0.524	6.377	94.3	6.3467	5	311	15.2	392.52	20.45	
12	Salem 3	2046	-70,944000	42,317000	18.9	18.9	0.11747	12.5	7.87	0	0.524	6,009	82.9	6.2267	5	311	15.2	396,90	13.27	
1.3	Salem 3	2047	-70.951000	42.306000	21.7	21.7	0.09378	12.5	7.87	0	0.524	5.889	39.0	5.4509	5	311	15.2		15.71	
14	Lynn 4	2051	-70.964500	42.292000	20.4	20.4	0.62976		8.14	0	0.538	5.949	61.8	4.7075	4	307	21.0		8.26	
15	Lynn 4	2052	-70.972000	42,287000	18.2	18.2	0.63796	0.0	8.14	0	0.538	6.096	84.5	4.4619	4	307	21.0	380.02	10.26	
16	Lynn 4	2053	-70.976500	42.294000	19.9	19.9	0.62739		8.14	0	0.538	5.834	56.5	4.4986	4	307	21.0		8.47	
1.7	Lynn 4	2054	-70,987000	42,298500	23.1	23.1	1.05393	0.0	8.14	0	0.538	5,935	29.3	4,4986	4	307	21.0		6,58	
.8	Lynn 4	2055	-70.978000	42.285000	17.5	17.5	0.78420		8.14	0	0.538	5.990	81.7	4.2579	4	307	21.0		14.67	
19	Lynn 4	2056	-70.992500	42.282500	20.2	20.2	0.80271		8.14	0	0.538	5.456	36.6	3.7965	4	307	21.0		11.69	
20	Lynn 4	2057	-70.955000	42.277600	18.2	18.2	0.72580	0.0	8.14	0	0.538	5.727	69.5	3.7965	4	307	21.0		11.28	
2.1	Lynn 4	2058	-70.983500	42.277000	13.6	13.6	1.25179		8.14	0	0.538	5.570	98.1	3.7979	4	307	21.0		21.02	
2.2	Lynn 4	2059	-70.982000	42.281000	19.6	19.6	0.85204		8.14	0	0.538	5.965	89.2	4.0123	4	307	21.0	392.53		
23	Lynn 4	2060	-70.977500	42.279000	15.2	15.2	1.23247		8.14	Θ	0.538	6.142	91.7	3.9769	4	307	21.0		18.72	
24	Lynn 4	2061	-70.973000	42.279000	14.5	14.5	0.98843		8.14	0	0.538	5.813	100.0	4.0952	4	307	21.0		19.88	
2.5	Lynn 4	2062	-70.969300	42.281600	15.6	15.6	0.75026		8.14	0	0.538	5.924	94.1	4.3996	4	307	21.0		16.30	
2.6	Lynn 4	2063	-70.954000	42.284000	13.9	13.9	0.84054		8.14	0	0.538	5.599	85.7	4.4546	4	307	21.0		16.51	
27	Lynn 4	2064	-70.959700	42.287000	16.6	16.6	0.67191		8.14	0	0.538	5.813	90.3	4.6820	4	307	21.0		14.81	
2.8	Lynn 4	2065	-70.959700	42.282500	14.8	14.8	0.95577		8.14	0	0.538	6.047	88.8	4.4534	4	307	21.0		17.28	
29	Lynn 4	2066	-70.957000	42.280000	18.4	18.4	0.77299		8.14	0	0.538	6.495	94.4	4.4547	4	307	21.0		12.80	
30	Lynn 4	2067	-70.951000	42.278000	21.0	21.0	1.00245		8.14	0	0.538	6.674	87.3	4.2390	4	307	21.0	380.23	11.98	
32	Lynn 4	2068	-70.967000	42.279000	12.7	12.7	1.13081		8.14	0	0.538	5.713	94.1	4.2330	4	307	21.0		22.60	
5.2	Lynn 4	2069	-70.964000	42.276500	14.5	14.5	1.35472		8.14	0	0.538	6.072	100.0	4.1750	4	307	21.0	376.73	13.04	
33	Lynn 4	2070	-70.972000	42.276500	13.2	13.2	1.38799		8.14	0	0.538	5.950	82.0	3.9900	4	307	21.0		27.71	
14	Lynn 4	2071	-70.979500	42.276000	13.1	13.1	1.15172		8.14	0	0.538	5.701	95.0		4	307	21.0	358.77	18.35	
35	Lynn 4	2072	-70.977500	42.272000	13.5	13.5	1.61282		8.14	0	0.538	6.096	96.9	3.7598	4	307	21.0	248.31	20.34	
36	Sargus 5	2081	-71.000000	42.270000	18.9	18.9	0.06417		5.96	0	0.499	5.933	68.2	3.3603	5	279	19.2		9.68	
37	Sargus 5	2082	-71.008000	42.274500	20.0	20.0	0.09744		5.96	0	0.499	5.841	61.4	3.3779	5	279	19.2	377.56	11.41	
38	Sargus 5	2083	-71.004000	42.286500	21.0	21.0	0.08014		5.96	0	0.499	5.850	41.5	3.9342	5	279	19.2		8.77	
59	Sargus 5	2084	-71.020000	42.287500	24.7	24.2	0.17505		5.96	0	0.499	5.966	30.2	3.8473	5	279	19.2	393.43	10.13	
40	Lynnfield	6	2091 -71.6	313000 42.	313000	30.8	30.8	0.02763	75.0	2.95	0	0.428	6.595	21.8	5.4011	3	252	18.3	395.63	4.32

Figure 2.1: The original dataset

### 2.2. Dataset Description

The dataset used in this project contains 506 rows and 20 columns. The columns in the dataset are as follows:

CRIM - per capita crime rate by town

ZN - proportion of residential land zoned for lots over 25,000 sq. ft.

INDUS - proportion of non-retail business acres per town

CHAS - Charles River dummy variable (= 1 if tract bounds river; 0 otherwise)

NOX - nitric oxides concentration (parts per 10 million)

RM - average number of rooms per dwelling

AGE - proportion of owner-occupied units built prior to 1940

DIS - weighted distances to five Boston employment centers

RAD - index of accessibility to radial highways

TAX - full-value property-tax rate per 10,000usd

PTRATIO - pupil-teacher ratio by town

B - 1000(Bk - 0.63)<sup>2</sup> - where Bk is the proportion of blacks by town

LSTAT - % lower status of the population

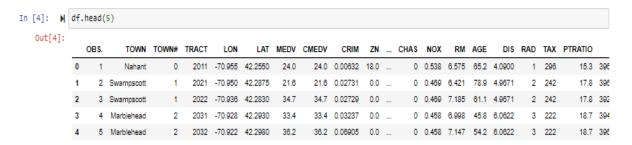


Figure 2.2.: Viewing the dataset

# 3. Data Exploration and Cleaning

Deriving information about the dataset through exploration and checking for unnecessary columns, null values, repeated values etc.

Figure 3.1: Exploring the datatype information

Figure 3.2: Checking for null values

	<pre>df.drop(columns=['OBS.'], axis=0, inplace=True) df.head()</pre>																			
Out[5]:		TOWN	TOWN#	TRACT	LON	LAT	MEDV	CMEDV	CRIM	ZN	INDUS	CHAS	NOX	RM	AGE	DIS	RAD	TAX	PTRATIO	E
	0	Nahant	0	2011	-70.955	42.2550	24.0	24.0	0.00632	18.0	2.31	0	0.538	6.575	65.2	4.0900	1	296	15.3	398.90
	1	Swampscott	1	2021	-70.950	42.2875	21.6	21.6	0.02731	0.0	7.07	0	0.469	6.421	78.9	4.9671	2	242	17.8	398.90
	2	Swampscott	1	2022	-70.936	42.2830	34.7	34.7	0.02729	0.0	7.07	0	0.469	7.185	61.1	4.9671	2	242	17.8	392.8
	3	Marblehead	2	2031	-70.928	42.2930	33.4	33.4	0.03237	0.0	2.18	0	0.458	6.998	45.8	6.0622	3	222	18.7	394.63
	4	Marblehead	2	2032	-70.922	42.2980	36.2	36.2	0.06905	0.0	2.18	0	0.458	7.147	54.2	6.0622	3	222	18.7	398.90
	$\left\{ \left[ \right] \right\}$																			

Figure 3.3: Dropping unnecessary columns

# 4. Exploratory Data Analysis

Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA) is important part of any data analysis. EDA helps to generate questions about the data, visualize, transform and summarize the data. It makes easier to find patterns, spot anomalies and check assumptions. EDA was originally developed by American Mathematician John Turkey in the 1970s and these techniques are widely used in data discovery process till date. The specific statistical techniques to perform with EDA tools include Clustering and dimension reduction, Univariate visualization, Bivariate visualizations and summary statistics, Multivariate visualizations, K-means Clustering etc.

The EDA performed on thr Boston Dataset can be seen in the figures below.

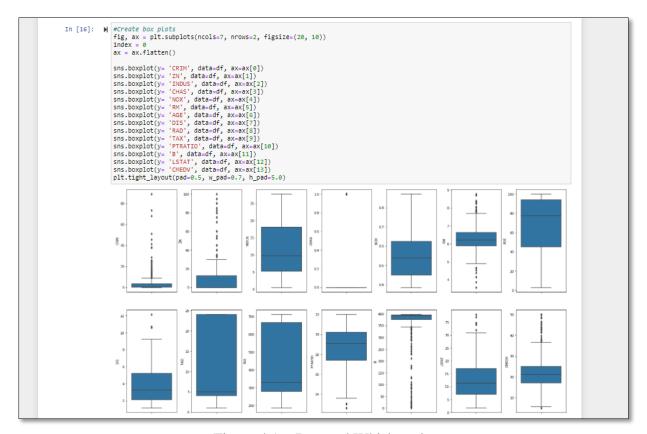


Figure 4.1.: Box and Whisker plot

The above figure is a box plot for various features in the dataset. It is used here to depict the data through quartiles. The lines extending are whiskers and indicate the variability outside the upper and lower quartiles. It can tell you if your data is symmetrical, how tightly your data is grouped, and if and how your data is skewed.

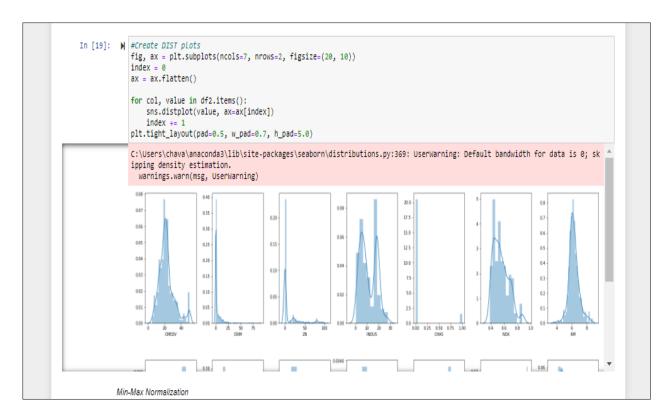


Figure 4.2. Dist plot

The above figure is a seaborn dist plot. It consist mainly of a histogram with line on it. Dist plot is a univariate distribution of observations.

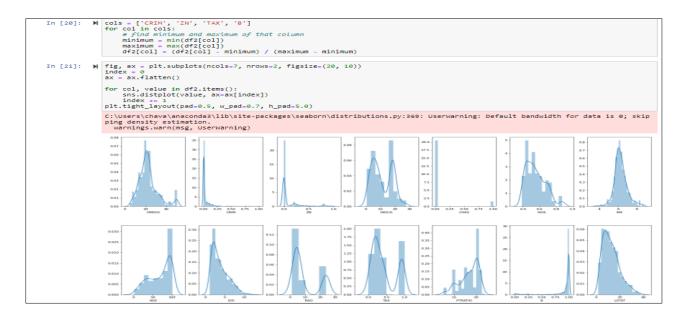


Figure 4.3: Dist plot after Min-Max Scaler

The min-max scaler is a preprocessing technique in the sklearn.preprocessing library. It is used to transform features by scaling each feature to a given range. The formula for transformation is given by

```
X_{std} = (X - X.min (axis=0)) / (X.max(axis=0) - X.min(axis=0))

X_{scaled} = X_{std} * (max - min) + min

Where min, max = feature_range.
```

The syntax in sklearn is

class sklearn.preprocessing.MinMaxScaler(feature\_range=0, 1, \*, copy=True, clip=False)

```
In [22]: ₩ # standardization
             from sklearn import preprocessing
             scalar = preprocessing.StandardScaler()
             # fit our data
             scaled_cols = scalar.fit_transform(df2[cols])
            scaled_cols = pd.DataFrame(scaled_cols, columns=cols)
            scaled cols.head()
   Out[22]:
                 CRIM ZN TAX
             0 -0.419782 0.284830 -0.666608 0.441052
              1 -0.417339 -0.487722 -0.987329 0.441052
             2 -0.417342 -0.487722 -0.987329 0.396427
             3 -0.416750 -0.487722 -1.106115 0.416163
             4 -0.412482 -0.487722 -1.108115 0.441052
In [23]: ▶ for col in cols:
                df2[col] = scaled_cols[col]
In [24]: M fig, ax = plt.subplots(ncols=7, nrows=2, figsize=(20, 10))
            index = 0
             ax = ax.flatten()
             for col, value in df2.items():
              sns.distplot(value, ax=ax[index])
                 index += 1
             plt.tight_layout(pad=0.5, w_pad=0.7, h_pad=5.0)
             C:\Users\chava\anaconda3\lib\site-packages\seaborn\distributions.py:369: UserWarning: Default bandwidth for data is 0; skip
             ping density estimation.
              warnings.warn(msg, UserWarning)
```

Figure 4.4: Standard scaler technique application

The standard scaler is a preprocessing technique in the sklearn.preprocessing library. It is used to standardize features by removing mean and scaling it to unit variance. The formula for transformation is given by

```
z = (x - u) / s
```

where u is the mean of the training samples or zero if with\_mean=False, and s is the standard deviation of the training samples or one if with\_std=False.

The syntax in sklearn is

class sklearn.preprocessing.StandardScaler(\*, copy=True, with\_mean=True, with\_std=True)



Figure 4.5.: Correlation Matrix

The correlation matrix is a table of correlation coefficients between variables. Every cell shows the correlation between two variables. A correlation matrix is used to summarize data, as an input into a more advanced analysis, and as a diagnostic for advanced analyses.

The common used of correlation matrix is to summarize large amount of data where the aim is to observe patterns, input into another analyses and as a diagnostic. Here, -1 indicates negative linear correlation, 0 indicates no linear correlation and 1 indicates positive linear correlation between two variables.

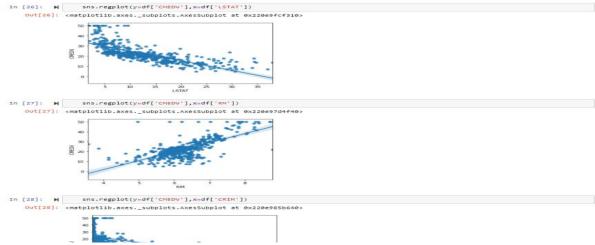


Figure 4.6: Feature Observation

### 5. Models

# 5.1. Linear Regression

Linear regression is ML algorithm based on supervised learning. It performs regression tasks and target prediction values based on independent variables. It is used for finding out relationship between variables and forecasting.



Figure 5.1: Linear Regression performed in the project

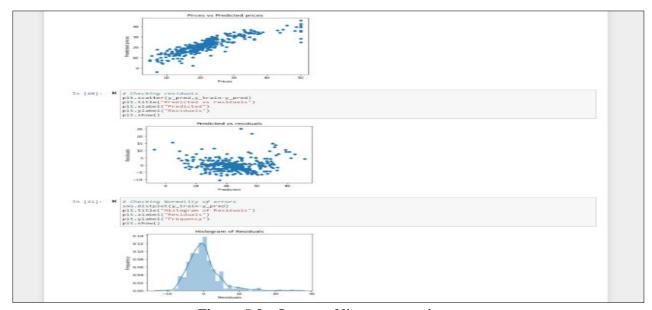


Figure 5.2: Output of linear regression

### **5.2. Random Forest Regressor**

Random forest regression is supervised learning algorithm using ensemble learning which combines multiple ML algorithms to makes accurate predictions. It is powerful and accurate and performs great on problems like nonlinear relationships. The disadvantage is that overfitting occurs easily.

```
Random Forest Regressor

In [47]: ## Importing Random Forest Regressor from sklearn.ensemble import RandomForestRegressor ##Creating Random Forest Regressor reg = RandomForestRegressor()

##Total the model using the training sets reg. fit(X_train, y_train)

Out[47]: RandomForestRegressor()

In [48]: ## Model prediction on train data y_pred = reg.predict(X_train)

In [49]: ## Model Evaluation print('R*2:'metrics.r2_score(y_train, y_pred)) print('R*2:'metrics.enan_solute_error(y_train, y_pred))*

print('Mat:'metrics.enan_solute_error(y_train, y_pred)) print('Mate':metrics.enan_solute_error(y_train, y_pred)))

print('Mste': metrics.enan_squared_error(y_train, y_pred)))

R*2: 0.980456226162348

Adjusted R*2: 0.997908964214966

MAE: 0.815564971751416

NSE: 1.467389596451977

RMSE: 1.2113585745125997

In [111]: ## print('CV Score:', cv_score)

CV Score: 31.23542592446512
```

Figure 5.3: Random Forest Regression performed in the project

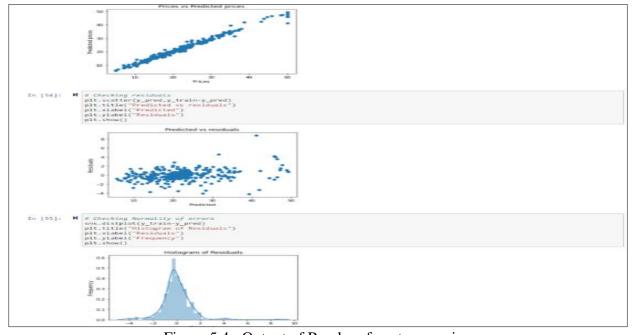


Figure 5.4 : Output of Random forest regression

### 5.3. Support Vector Regressor

The SVM Regressor works on the principle of SVM classification. It is adapted form of SVM when dependent variable is numerical and not categorical. The main benefit is that it is a non parametric technique. The output does not depend on distributions of underlying dependent and non dependent variables.

Figure 5.5: SVM Regression performed in the project

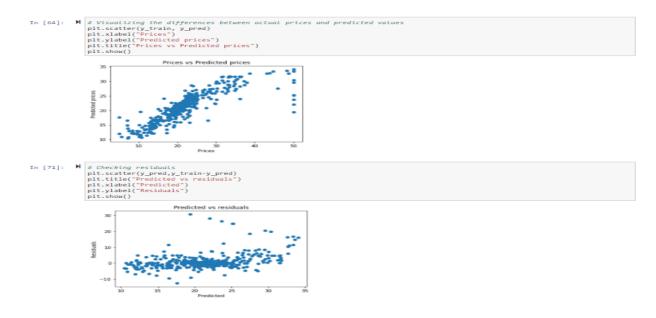


Figure 5.6: Output of SVM regression

### **5.4. XGBoost Regressor**

XGBoost is a tool for building supervised learning models. The results of the regression problems are continuous or real values. Some commonly used regression algorithms are Linear Regression and Decision Trees. Root-mean-squared error (RMSE) and mean-squared-error (MAE) are metrics involved in the regression. RMSE is square root of mean squared error. MAE is an absolute sum of actual and predicted differences.

Figure 5.7: XGBoost Regression performed in the project

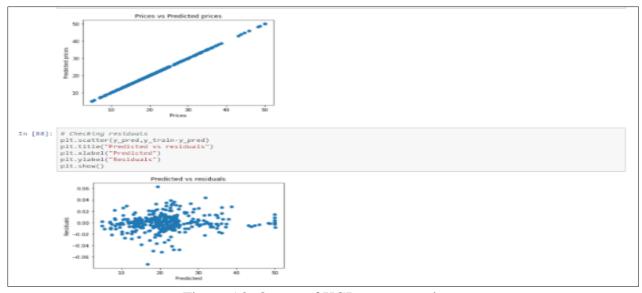


Figure 5.8: Output of XGBoost regression

### 5.5. Model Evaluation

After evaluating all the four models to find the best model, it is concluded that the XGBoost Regressor is the best model with R-squared score of 88.8% and Cross validation score of 16.34.

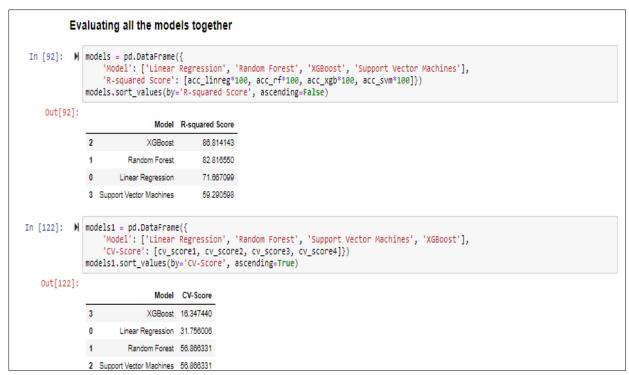


Figure 5.9: Results of model evaluation

# 6. Data Visualization using Tableau

The Tableau Story is the other half of this project where the price predictions that were made using the different models can be visualized. Here, the Tableau visualization will give an interactive demonstration of the factors and their direct or indirect effect on the price of the houses.

There are multiple charts used in the workbook for creating a story based on the Boston House price prediction.

There are four dashboards used to create a story. First dashboard consists of a map showing the areas with size varying marks with respect to the interest measure selected. Second visualizes the effect on the average measures due to different price range. Third dashboards consists of top areas with highest and lowest measures. All the dashboards are interactive and one can select the interest measure to visualize the necessary information.

# **Boston House Price Prediction**

This Tableau story visualized various factors that are responsible for the house prices in and around Boston, Massachusetts. The abbrevations used in the charts are mentioned below.

2. Select the Interest measure from the dropdown below to visualize in the 3. When buying a house there is a budget price range. Here in map the areas that have highest and lowest respective measures. Also, how these measures affect the price of house can be seen in the right cha. determining the average measures and the rates for every rang.

this dashboard, selecting the desired price range will help in



Figure 6.1: Tableau story point 1

### **Boston House Price Prediction**

This Tableau story visualized various factors that are responsible for the house prices in and around Boston, Massachusetts. The abbrevations used in the charts are mentioned below.

2. Select the Interest measure from the dropdown below to visualize in the map the areas that have highest and lowest respective measures. Also, how these measures affect the price of house can be seen in the right cha..

3. When buying a house there is a budget price range. Here in this dashboard, selecting the desired price range will help in determining the average measures and the rates for every range.

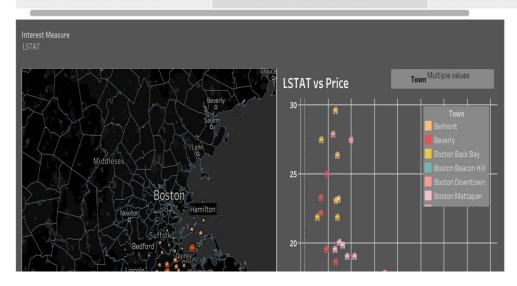


Figure 6.2: Tableau story point 2

# **Boston House Price Prediction**

2. Select the Interest measure from the dropdown below to visualize in the map the areas that have highest and lowest respective measures. Also, ho...

3. When buying a house there is a budget price range. Here in this dashboard, selecting the desired price range will help in determining the average measures and the rates for every range.

4. Finding top 10 areas with highest and lowest Measures. Select the desired Interest Measure from the List to visualize the top 10 areas.

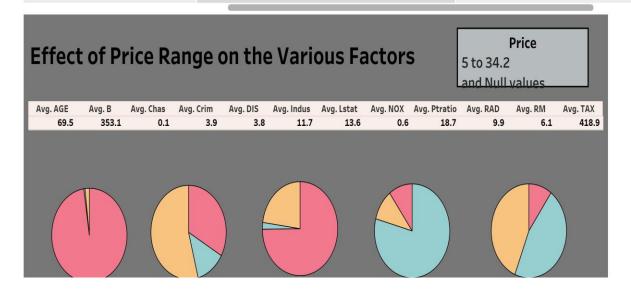


Figure 6.3: Tableau story point 3

### **Boston House Price Prediction**

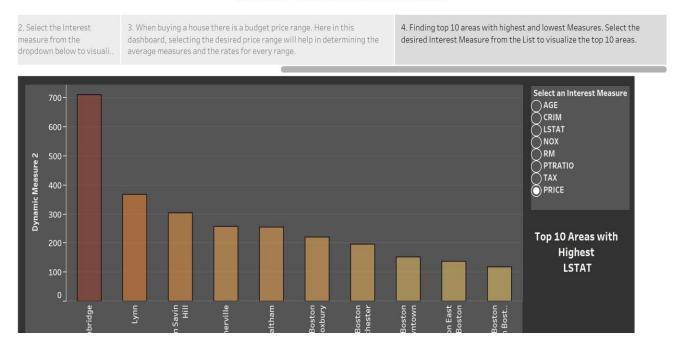


Figure 6.4: Tableau story point 4

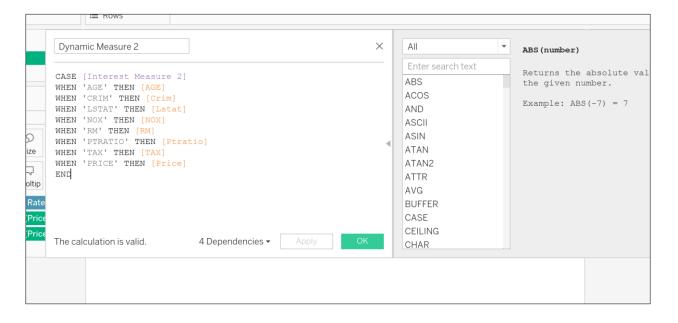


Figure 6.5: Tableau calculation used in most of the sheets

# 7. Conclusion

- The XGBoost is the best model for predicting the monetary value of the house price based on various features with R-squared score of 88.8% and cross validation score of 16.34.
- The Price is comparatively low in the areas where the crime rate is high and vice versa in most cases.
- The highest crime rate is in Boston's Roxbury area but the price is not comparatively low.
- The price is high for the house with more number of rooms but that fails in case of some areas. This is due to other measures having more effect.
- The price is less where the Tax is high in most cases.
- The price is very low where the NOX is high.
- Pupil Teacher Ratio does not affect the price in all the areas.
- The price is low in area where the low status population is high.

# 8. References

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