



Fast Outlier Detection in Oblique Subspace

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Oct. 22, 2025



Publication & Authorship

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Publication

- **Conference:** ACM CIKM 2025 (Nov. 10–14, 2025, Seoul, Korea)
- **Paper Title:** Fast Outlier Detection in Oblique Subspaces
- **Authors:** Bowen Li, Charu C. Aggarwal, Peixiang Zhao
- **Affiliations:** Florida State University, IBM T. J. Watson Research Center





Authors

- **Name:** Bowen Li
 - A final-year PhD student, Computer Science
- **Advisor:** Prof. Peixiang Zhao
- **Research Interests:** Data mining, large-scale database systems, and learning-driven solutions to fundamental data problems.

Co-Authors



- **Dr. Peixiang Zhao**
- Full professor
- Computer Science,
Florida State University



- **Dr. Charu C. Aggarwal**
- Distinguished Research
Staff Member
- IBM T. J. Watson
Research Center



Introduction

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Problem Statement

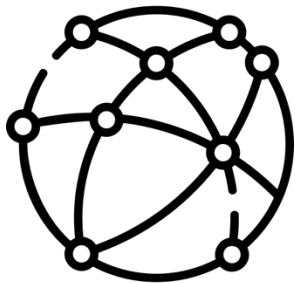
- **Problem:** outlier detection
- **Definition:**

In high-dimensional datasets, an **outlier** is a data object deviating significantly from the general patterns of underlying data, often appearing distant or unusual to other objects (a.k.a. **inliers**).

- **Reasons:**
 - Natural variation in the data
 - Mistakes or noise during data collection
 - Rare or unusual events that carry important insights

Applications

- Intrusion identification
- Medical diagnosis
- Financial fraud detection
- Traffic management
- And so on ...





Challenge

- Curse of dimensionality
- High computational cost (e.g., $O(n^2)$ or more).
- Dependence on predefined attributes or vector representations.



Related Work

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Categories

- Statistical methods
- Distance-based methods
- Density-based methods
- Pattern compression methods
- Spectral methods
- Subspace methods



RS-Hash

- A subspace hashing method

A_1 [.....]

A_2 [.....]

A_3 [.....]

•

•

•

A_n [.....]

Dataset D



RS-Hash: Sampling

- Sampling m ($m \leq n$) points randomly

S_1 [.....]

S_2 [.....]

S_3 [.....]

.

.

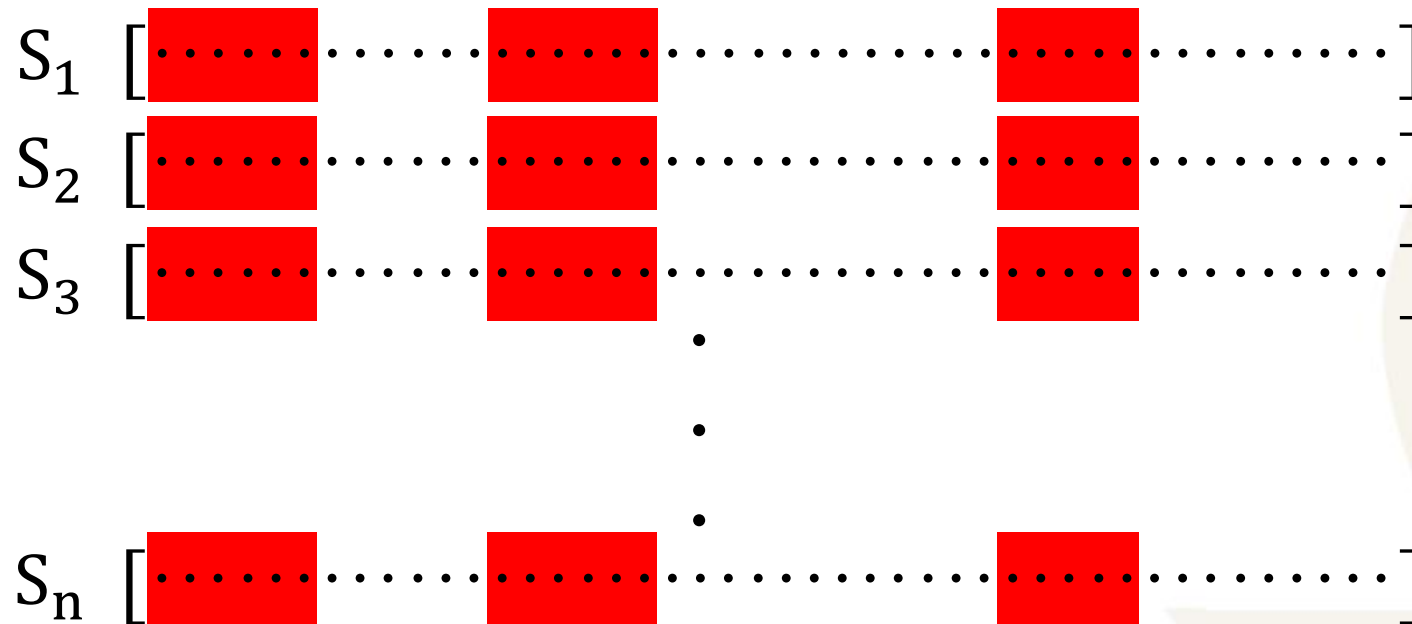
.

S_m [.....]

Sample S

RS-Hash: Subspace

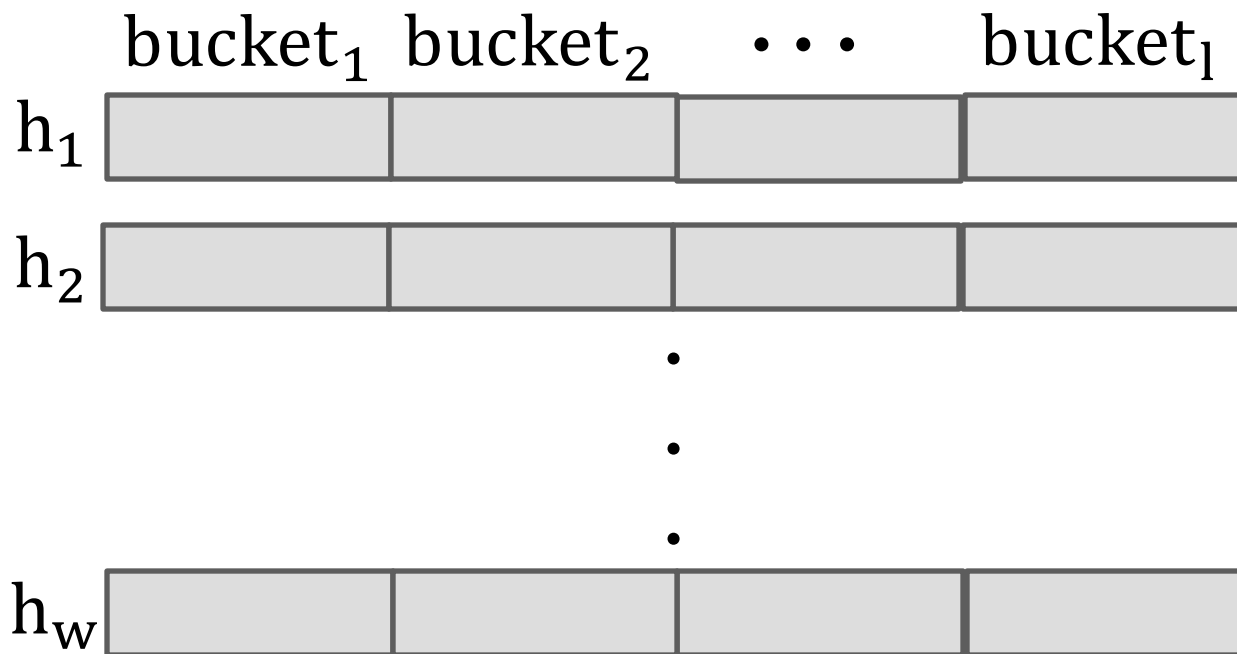
- Select r subspaces randomly



Subspace Histogram R

RS-Hash: Hashing

- Train a **Count-Min Sketch**



Count-Min Sketch H



Limitation

- Designed for multidimensional data with *pre-defined dimensions or attributes*
- Limited to *axis-parallel subspaces*
- How about those *arbitrary-shaped or schema-less data* without explicit dimensions?



Oblique Subspaces

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Problem Setting

- A data collection $\mathcal{O} = \{O_1, O_2, \dots, O_n\}$
 - n objects: multidimensional vectors, graphs, time series and, so on.
 - Similarity function: $S_{ij} = s(O_i, O_j)$
 - Multidimensional vectors: L2 distance-based similarity
 - Time series: dynamic time wrapping (DTW)
 - Graphs: graph-kernel based similarity

Oblique Vector Direction

- Consider a pair of objects (O_i, O_j) from \mathcal{O} to construct an **oblique** vector direction
- For the rest of the objects O_k , the projection on the oblique vector direction can be defined as:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{proj}(O_k) &= (\vec{X}_k - \vec{X}_i) \cdot (\vec{X}_j - \vec{X}_i) \\ &= \vec{X}_k \cdot \vec{X}_j - \vec{X}_k \cdot \vec{X}_i - \vec{X}_i \cdot \vec{X}_j + \vec{X}_i \cdot \vec{X}_i \quad (1) \\ &= s_{kj} - s_{ki} - s_{ij} + s_{ii}.\end{aligned}$$

- picking r pairs of objects \rightarrow an r -dimensional oblique subspace of $\mathcal{O} \rightarrow$ create a histogram in this oblique subspace



OS-Hash

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OS-Hash

1. Parameter Selection
2. Oblique Subspace Identification
3. Sample Data Projection
4. Oblique Subspace Hashing
5. Outlier Score Evaluation



Step 1: Parameter Selection

- **Sampling size s**
 - a small constant
 - $s = \min\{n, 1000\}$
- **Locality parameter f**
 - defines the bucket width as a fraction of the length along each oblique dimension
 - $f = (1/\sqrt{s}, 1 - 1/\sqrt{s})$
- **Oblique subspace dimensionality r**
 - $\lceil 1 + 0.5 \lfloor \log_{\max\{2, 1/f\}}(s) \rfloor \rceil, \lceil \log_{\max\{2, 1/f\}}(s) \rceil$



Step2: Oblique Subspace Identification

- Sample r pairs of objects at random from \mathcal{O} randomly
 - i -th pair of objects, $(\mathbf{O}_{a_i}, \mathbf{O}_{b_i})$
 - i -th oblique dimension
- r -dimensional oblique subspaces for \mathcal{O}



Step 3: Sample Data Projection

- Select a sample $S \subseteq O$ of objects at random, where $|S|=s$
- Project the objects of S along each of r oblique dimensions specified by (O_{a_i}, O_{b_i}) according to Equation 1.
- Each sample object $O_i \in S$ is represented as an r -dimensional vector in the oblique subspace
 - j -th oblique dimension: z_{ij}

Step 3: Cont'd

- normalize \mathbf{z}_{ij} to \mathbf{z}'_{ij}

$$z'_{ij} \Leftarrow \frac{z_{ij} - \min_j}{\max_j - \min_j} \quad (2)$$

- a normalized r -dimensional vector of sampled object \mathbf{O}_i

$$\vec{Z}'_i = (z'_{i1}, \dots, z'_{ir})$$



Step 3: Cont'd

- Create for each \mathbf{O}_i a new r -dimensional discrete vector $\vec{\mathbf{Y}}_i$
 - $y_{ij} = \lfloor (z'_{ij} + \alpha_j)/f \rfloor$
 - α_j is a shift parameter drawn uniformly at random from $(0, f)$
 - address the edge effects in the first and last buckets of the histogram
 - the integer bucket values of \mathbf{O}_i using the fractional width f for each bucket
- Define a histogram representing all the r oblique dimensions.



Step 4: Oblique Subspace Hashing

- Construct a Count-Min sketch \mathbf{H}
 - Width w : w hash tables implementing w pairwise independent hash functions
 - Length l : the number of elements of these hash tables
 - **Input**: r -dimensional bucket vector $\vec{\mathbf{Y}}_i$
 - **Output**: integer value in the range of $(0, l-1)$
- Apply each hash function \mathbf{H}_k upon $\vec{\mathbf{Y}}_i$,
 - increment the count value in $\mathbf{H}_k(\vec{\mathbf{Y}}_i)$ – th bucket by 1



Step 5: Outlier Score Evaluation

- Transform each object $\mathbf{O}_i \in \mathbf{O}$ into its r -dimensional bucket representation $\vec{\mathbf{Y}}_i$
 - Approximation: The values of \mathbf{min}_j and \mathbf{max}_j are derived from the sample \mathbf{S}
- Insert $\vec{\mathbf{Y}}_i$ into the constructed Count-Min Sketch \mathbf{H}
 - \mathbf{c}_k : the value of the $\mathbf{H}_k(\vec{\mathbf{Y}}_i)$ -th cell in the k -th hash table
 - $\mathbf{O}_i \in \mathbf{S} : \text{score}(\mathbf{O}_i) = \log_2(\min\{c_1, \dots, c_w\})$
 - $\mathbf{O}_i \notin \mathbf{S} : \text{score}(\mathbf{O}_i) = \log_2(\min\{c_1, \dots, c_w\} + 1)$



Step 5: Cont'd

- A single-base detector of OS-Hash is too weak
- Repeat m times, once for each base detector of the ensemble
- Let os_j^i represent the outlier score of the i -th object from the j -th base detector

$$\text{OS-Hash}(O_i) = \frac{1}{m} \sum_{j=1}^m os_j^i \quad (3)$$



Count-Min Sketch-Based Hashing

- Count-Min Sketch H
 - w hash tables: $w=4$
 - Hash value range l : $l=10*s=10,000$
- For each hash table:
 - success probability of a single object: $1/l$
 - No collision between s sampled objects: $(1 - 1/l)^s$
- Collision within w hash tables: $(1 - (1 - 1/l)^s)^w$
- No collisions arise in at least one of the w hash tables

$$[1 - (1 - (1 - 1/l)^s)^w] \approx 0.9999$$



Complexity

- **Time Complexity:** $O(nmT \log s)$
 - $O(T)$: object similarity computation
 - $O(n \log s)$: number of similarity computation $O(nr)$
 - $O(r) \rightarrow O(\log s)$
 - $O(m)$: number of base outlier detectors
 - Linear
- **Space Complexity:** $O(w \cdot l)$
 - Constants



OS-Hash in Data Stream

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Challenge

- **Data streams:** a continuous and rapid flow of data objects arrives in real time
 - Processed in one pass
 - A large amount of data is coming quickly and continuously
 - Rapid changes of underlying patterns
- Real-time outlier detection is extremely challenging!



Techniques in Data Stream

- **Sliding Window:** Incoming objects are automatically inserted into the sketch, and obsolete ones falling off from the sliding window are removed.
- **Time-decayed model:** an exponential function with a decay rate λ to quantify the time-varying weight of an object O_i
 - t objects have arrived after O_i , the weight of O_i is $2^{-\lambda t}$



Modifications

- Each base detector is created consecutively → Maintain all ensemble components in the same Count-Min sketch:
 - The values of **min_j** and **max_j**: estimated an initial sample of streaming data.
 - Sampling size $s = \max\{1000, 1/(1 - 2^{-\lambda})\}$
 - Locality parameter **f**, dimensionality **r**, and shift parameters **α** : calculated in the initial step at one time



Lazy Weighting Strategy

- In each Count-Min Sketch cell
 - Count
 - t_l : last time it is updated
- When a new object is streaming in
 - t_c : the current time stamp
 - Updated count: $c * 2^{-\lambda(t_c - t_l)} + 1$



OS-Stream

For the streaming object \mathcal{O} , we compute its score

1. For each base detector $i \in \{1, \dots, m\}$, calculate the \mathbf{r} -dimensional bucket representation \vec{Y}_i
2. For each hash function \mathbf{H}_k , compute the $\mathbf{H}_k(\vec{Y}_i)$ to get the weighted count \mathbf{c}_k^i
3. The score of i -th based detector is $\log(1 + \min\{c_1^i, \dots, c_w^i\})$, sum them and calculate the average
4. Update both the counts and time-stamps



Experiment

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Datasets

- **Multidimensional Datasets**
 - *Static*: LYMPHOGRAPHY, CARDIO, MUSK, WAVEFORM, KDDCUP99
 - *Stream*: ACTIVITY, KDDCUP99-T,
- **Time Series Datasets**
 - *Static*: PICKUP, PEBBLE, POWER, ECG5000, CROP
 - *Stream*: ACTIVITY-T, CROP-T
- **Graph Datasets**
 - *Static*: MUTAG, FINGER, AIDS, MUTAGEN, TOX21
 - *Stream*: TOX21-AR-T, MCF-7-T



Statistics of datasets

Dataset	#Objs	#Dims	Outliers (%)
Static Datasets			
LYMPHOGRAPHY	148	18	3.4
CARDIO	1,831	21	9.6
MUSK	3,062	166	3.1
WAVEFORM	3,509	21	4.7
KDDCUP99	25,000	41	0.7
Streaming Datasets			
ACTIVITY	21,383	51	10.0
KDDCUP99-T	25,000	41	0.7

Table 1: Multidimensional Datasets



Statistics of datasets

Dataset	#Objs	Outliers (%)
Static Datasets		
PICKUP	45	14.29
PEBBLE	120	12.50
POWER	600	14.00
ECG5000	3,039	3.94
CROP	16,500	2.42
Streaming Datasets		
ACTIVITY-T	21,383	10.0
CROP-T	16,500	2.42

Table 2: Time Series Datasets



Statistics of datasets

Dataset	Graphs	Avg. $ V $	Avg. $ E $	Outliers (%)
Static Datasets				
MUTAG	135	19.24	21.76	7.4
FINGER	534	5.84	4.72	3.18
AIDS	1,800	13.11	13.37	11.11
MUTAGEN	2,500	29.66	30.54	3.96
TOX21	10,000	18.41	18.87	3.89
Streaming Datasets				
TOX21-AR-T	10,000	18.41	18.87	3.89
MCF-7-T	20,000	27.43	29.68	10.00

Table 3: Graph Datasets



Evaluation Metrics

- **Effectiveness**
 - Area Under the Curve (AUC) Score
 - *Static*: Receiver Operating Characteristics (ROC) Curve
- **Efficiency**
 - *Static*: overall runtime (in seconds)
 - *Stream*: the number of objects processed per second



Baselines

- **Multidimensional Datasets**
 - *Static*: AvgKNN, FastABOD, iForest, HiCS, LOF, and RS-Hash
 - *Stream*: RS-Stream, LOF-Stream, and AvgKNN-Stream
- **Time Series and Graph Datasets**
 - *Static*: AvgKNN, LOF, COF, LoOP
 - *Stream*: LOF-Stream and AvgKNN-Stream

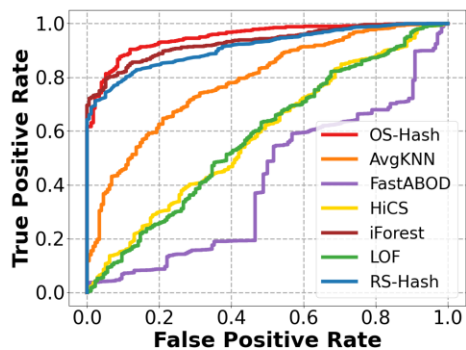


Static: Multidimensional Datasets

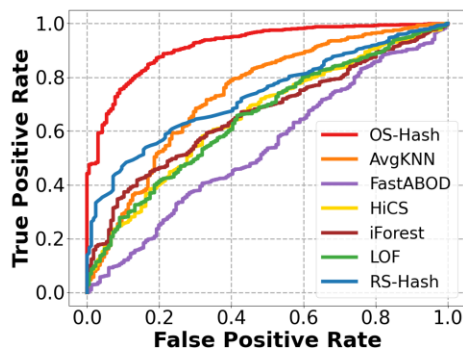
Dataset	OS-Hash	RS-Hash	AvgKNN	LOF	iForest	HiCS	FastABOD
LYMPHOGRAPHY	97.28	99.92	97.89	97.41	99.30	95.85	46.36
CARDIO	94.98	91.19	78.53	58.00	93.07	58.27	41.16
MUSK	100.00	100.00	24.10	39.17	100.00	39.50	48.78
WAVEFORM	91.23	72.97	73.83	65.03	66.20	65.23	53.68
KDDCUP99	92.91	99.96	14.35	44.69	99.94	52.19	38.27

Table 4: AUC results for multidimensional datasets

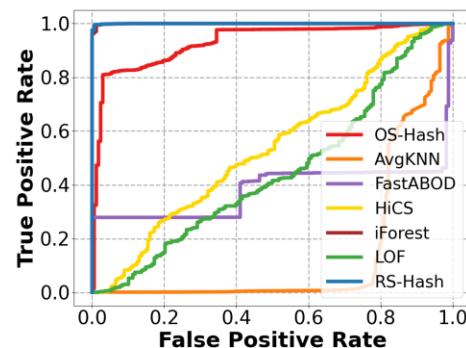
Static: Multidimensional Datasets



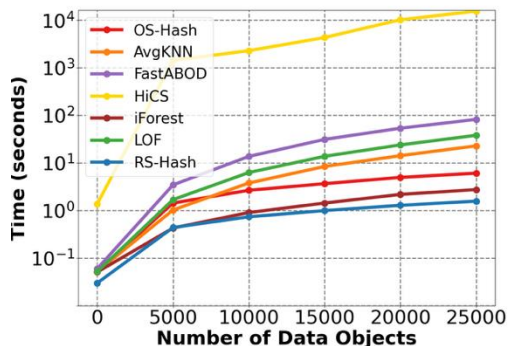
CARDIO



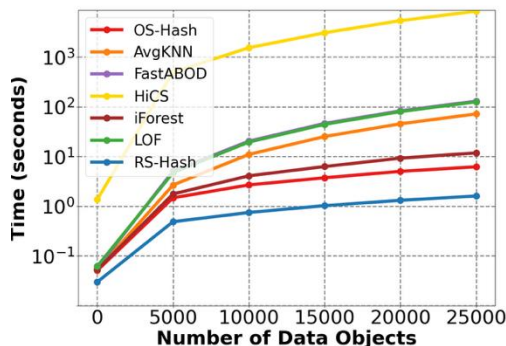
WAVEFORM



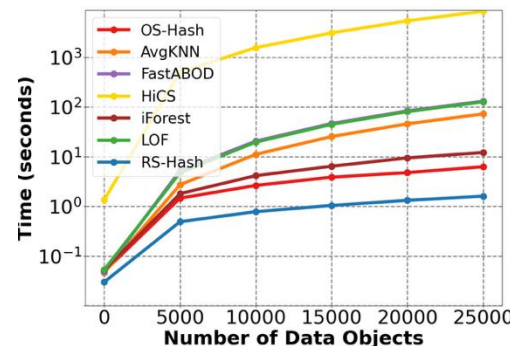
KDDCUP99



KDDCUP99



NORMAL(0,1)



UNIFORM(0,1)

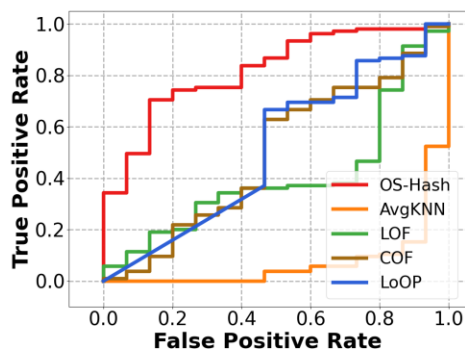


Static: Time Series Datasets

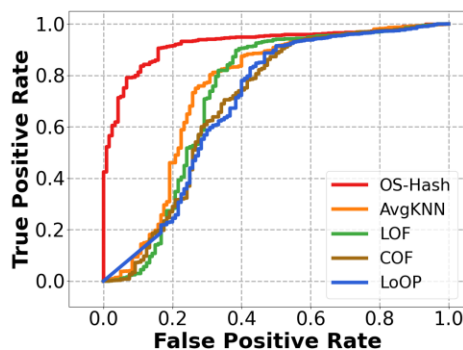
Dataset	OS-Hash	AvgKNN	LOF	COF	LoOP
PICKUP	75.00	74.50	73.00	68.50	63.75
PEBBLE	79.17	77.11	41.02	49.59	51.14
POWER	66.03	52.10	37.43	40.82	38.89
ECG5000	92.17	74.41	72.14	69.26	69.35
CROP	83.96	66.82	35.68	38.32	36.78

Table 5: AUC results for time series datasets

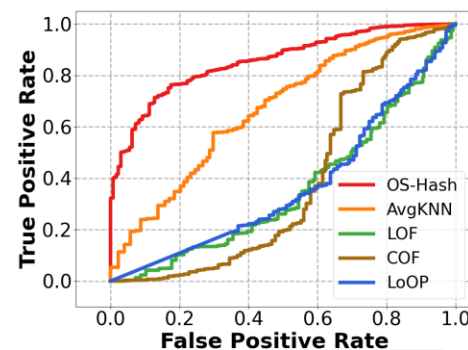
Static: Time Series Datasets



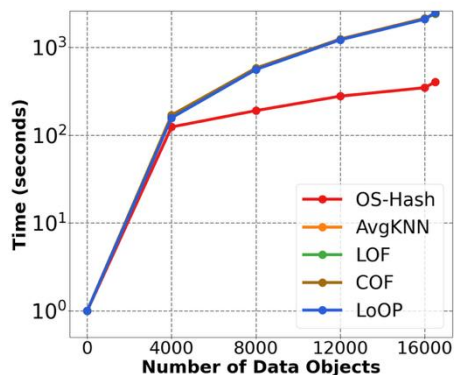
PEBBLE



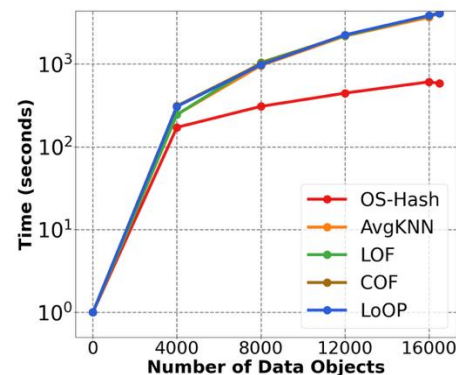
ECG5000



CROP



CROP



UNIFORM(0,1)

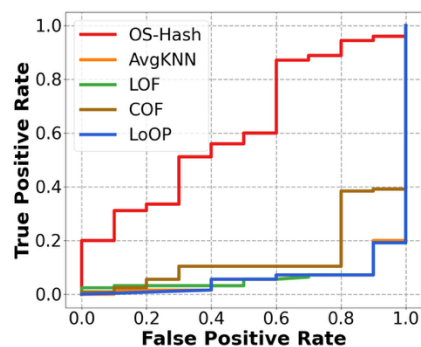


Static: Graph Datasets

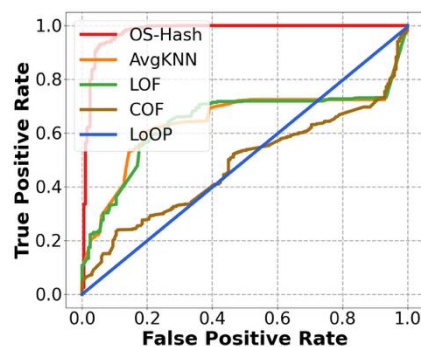
Dataset	OS-Hash	AvgKNN	LOF	COF	LoOP
MUTAG	61.62	5.76	6.04	13.84	5.52
FINGER	55.03	51.59	41.38	48.43	51.59
AIDS	97.51	64.43	64.22	48.09	49.75
MUTAGEN	63.52	56.51	55.14	60.40	58.05
TOX21	71.97	49.58	49.67	50.51	50.00

Table 6: AUC results for graph datasets

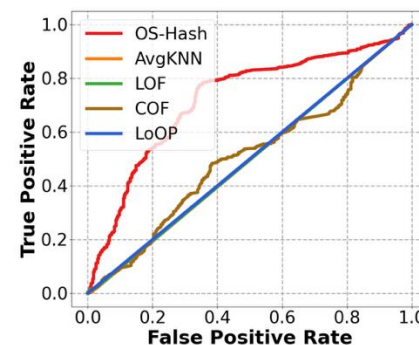
Static: Multidimensional Dataset



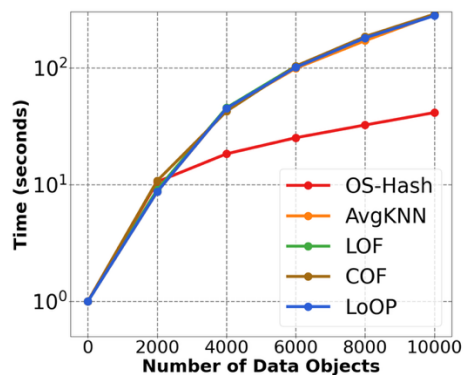
MUTAG



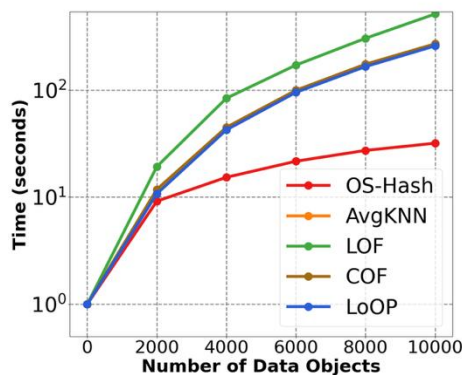
AIDS



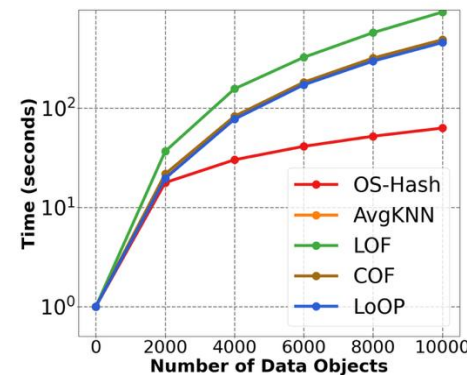
TOX21



TOX21



EDGE18



NODE18



Stream: AUC Scores

Dataset	OS-Stream	RS-Stream	AvgKNN-Stream	LOF-Stream
ACTIVITY	99.96	84.51	33.59	38.55
KDDCUP99-T	87.09	95.27	12.43	66.35

Table 7: AUC results in multidimensional data streams

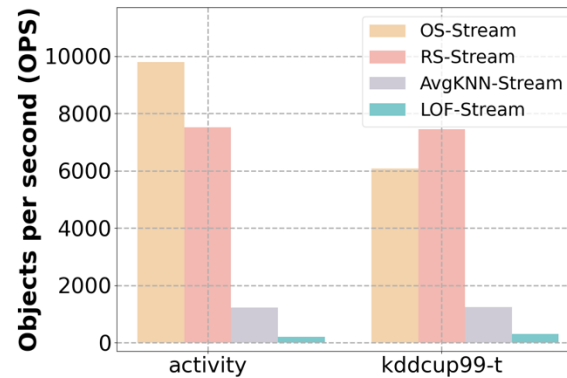
Dataset	OS-Stream	AvgKNN-Stream	LOF-Stream
ACTIVITY-T	81.89	35.08	40.57
CROP-T	81.99	71.89	52.97

Table 8: AUC results in time series data streams

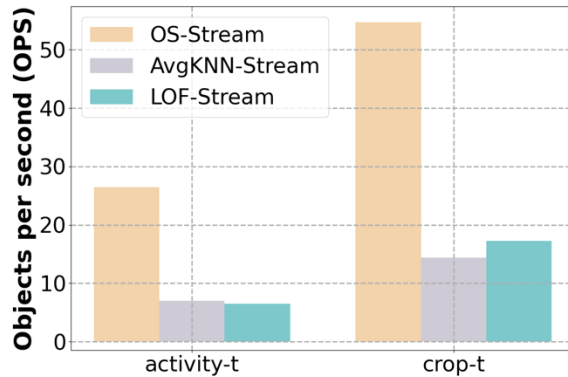
Dataset	OS-Stream	AvgKNN-Stream	LOF-Stream
TOX21-AR-T	72.07	52.87	53.64
MCF-7-T	60.08	52.94	56.18

Table 9: AUC results in graph data streams

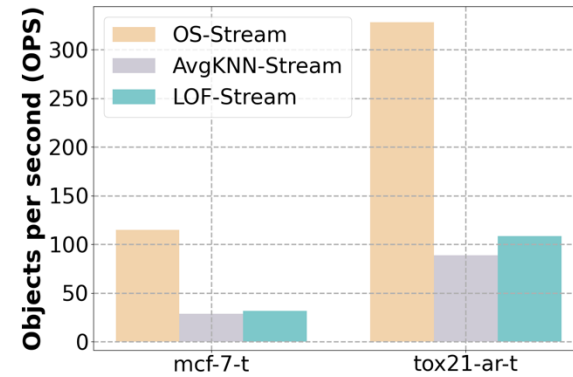
Stream: Object per Second



Multidimensional

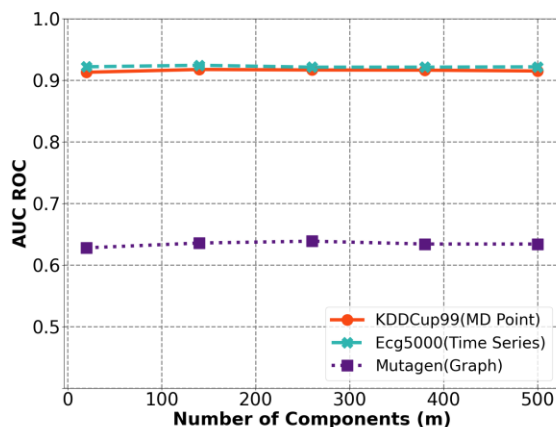


Time Series

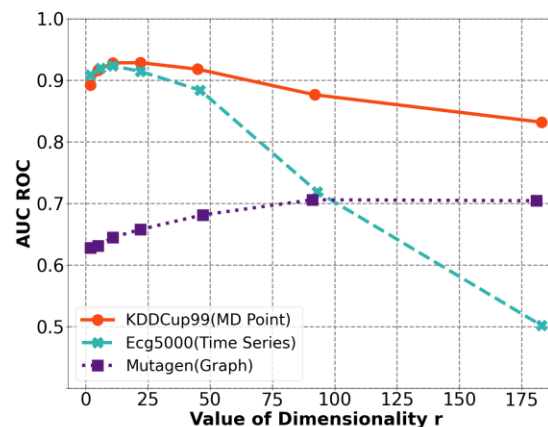


Graphs

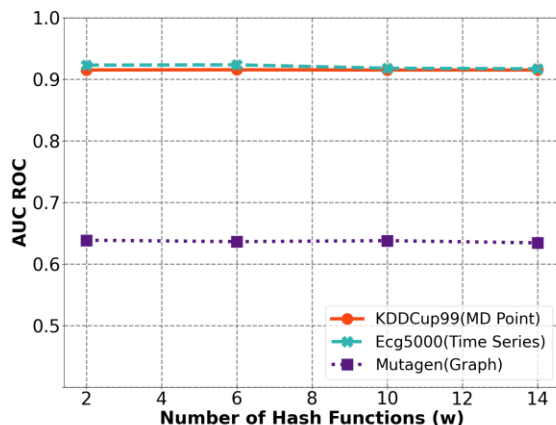
Parameter Analysis



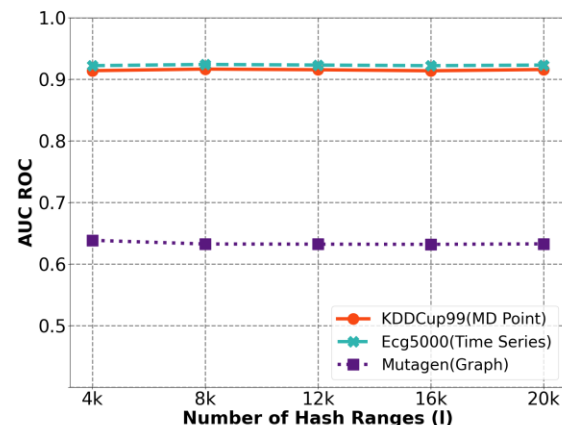
Base Detectors, m



Dimensionality, r



Hash Functions, w



Hash Table Size, l



Conclusion

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Conclusion

- Proposed OS-Hash, a linear-time, constant-space oblique subspace outlier detector.
- Introduced oblique subspaces for arbitrary-shaped data.
- Applicable to multidimensional, time-series, graph, and streaming data.
- Experiments show superior accuracy, efficiency, and generality over state-of-the-art methods.



Thank You!

