**IEEE BASE PAPER TITLE:**

**Fake Profile Detection on Social Networking Websites using Machine Learning**

**(or)**

**OUR PROPOSED PROJECT TITLE:**

**Instagram Fake Account Detection using Machine Learning**

**IEEE BASE PAPER ABSTRACT:**

These days, social media has a significant impact on everyone’s life. Most people frequently utilize social media platforms. Each of these social media platforms offers benefits and drawbacks, as well as security risks for our information. To determine who poses threats on these platforms, it is necessary to distinguish between the real and fake social media profiles. There are traditionally used various methods for identifying fake social media accounts. But these platforms need to be better at identifying phoney accounts. The accuracy rate of identifying fake accounts utilising timestamp data types is improved in this proposed work employing high gradient boosting algorithms and Natural Language Processing. In order to investigate the relationship between various machine learning methods and multi-features in time series, this study employs a variety of machine learning techniques.

**OUR PROPOSED ABSTRACT:**

In an age where social media has become an integral part of our lives, the challenge of detecting fake accounts on platforms like Instagram has gained significant importance. This project, titled "Instagram Fake Account Detection using Machine Learning" employs Python as its primary tool to tackle this problem. It leverages two powerful machine learning algorithms, the Random Forest Classifier and the Decision Tree Classifier, to accomplish this task.

The Random Forest Classifier demonstrates remarkable performance, achieving a 100% accuracy on the training dataset and an impressive 93% accuracy on the test dataset. Meanwhile, the Decision Tree Classifier exhibits its effectiveness with a training accuracy of 92% and a test accuracy of 92%.

The dataset employed in this project is composed of 576 records, each characterized by 12 distinct features. These features encompass critical aspects of Instagram profiles, including the presence of a profile picture, the ratio of numerical characters in usernames, the breakdown of full names into word tokens, the ratio of numerical characters in full names, the equality between usernames and full names, the length of user bios, the existence of external URLs, the privacy status of accounts, the number of posts, the count of followers, the number of accounts followed, and the ultimate classification of an account as "Fake" or "Not."

By harnessing the capabilities of Python and these advanced machine learning models, this project endeavors to provide a robust and efficient solution for the identification of fake Instagram accounts. In doing so, it contributes to the preservation of the platform's integrity and the security of its users.

**EXISTING SYSTEM:**

* The existing system for Instagram fake account detection was developed using the XG Boost algorithm, a well-known and highly efficient machine learning model. The XG Boost algorithm is renowned for its ability to handle complex datasets and perform exceptionally well in classification tasks, making it a suitable choice for this specific application.
* In the existing system, a dataset of Instagram profiles with associated features was used for training and testing the XG Boost model. The features in the dataset were carefully selected to capture key attributes of user profiles, which are indicative of whether an account is genuine or fake.
* XG Boost, an ensemble learning algorithm, excels in enhancing predictive accuracy by combining the predictions of multiple decision trees. This approach allows the model to capture complex patterns and relationships in the data, enabling it to make highly accurate predictions about the authenticity of Instagram accounts.
* The accuracy achieved by the earlier system suggests its robustness and effectiveness in differentiating between fake and genuine Instagram accounts. This level of accuracy is crucial for maintaining the trust and security of the Instagram platform, as it helps in identifying and mitigating the presence of fake accounts, which can be associated with various malicious activities.
* Overall, the earlier system's use of the XGBoost algorithm and its exceptional accuracy rate highlight its capability to address the challenge of Instagram fake account detection with precision and efficiency.

**DISADVANTAGES OF EXISTING SYSTEM:**

* Limited Explanation of Predictions: The XG Boost algorithm, while highly accurate, is often considered a "black box" model, making it challenging to provide detailed explanations for its predictions. This lack of transparency can be a disadvantage when users or administrators need to understand why a particular account was flagged as fake.
* Sensitivity to Imbalanced Datasets: Like many machine learning algorithms, XGBoost can be sensitive to imbalanced datasets. If there is a significant disparity between the number of fake and genuine accounts in the dataset, it may lead to biased predictions and less reliable results.
* Dependence on Feature Engineering: Achieving high accuracy with XGBoost often depends on the quality of feature engineering. The selection and engineering of relevant features require domain expertise and can be time-consuming.
* Limited Adaptability: The existing system may struggle to adapt to emerging trends or new techniques used by malicious actors to create fake Instagram accounts. Since XG Boost is a static model, it may not easily incorporate new information or adapt to evolving threats.
* Computational Resource Intensiveness: XG Boost can be computationally intensive, especially for large datasets. This can lead to longer training and inference times, which may not be suitable for real-time or near-real-time detection requirements.
* Potential Overfitting: While the system achieved a high accuracy of 96.29%, there is a risk of overfitting, where the model may perform exceptionally well on the training data but struggle with generalization to unseen data. Overfitting can lead to false positives and false negatives in real-world scenarios.
* Dependency on Data Quality: The accuracy and performance of the system are heavily reliant on the quality of the training data. Inaccurate or incomplete data can result in suboptimal performance and may require continuous efforts to maintain data quality.
* Inability to Address Textual Content: The existing system's focus on numerical and structured features may limit its ability to detect fake accounts that primarily engage in posting deceptive or harmful content through text, such as fake news or hate speech.
* Lack of Multi-Modal Analysis: Instagram includes various types of content, including images and videos. The system's sole reliance on structured data may overlook fake accounts that use images or other non-textual content for deceptive purposes.
* Privacy Concerns: The system's high accuracy in identifying fake accounts may raise privacy concerns, as it could inadvertently flag genuine users as fake based on certain behaviors or characteristics, potentially leading to user dissatisfaction or mistrust.

**PROPOSED SYSTEM:**

* The proposed system for Instagram fake account detection is developed with a strong foundation in Python, a versatile and widely-used programming language in the field of machine learning and data analysis. The system leverages two key machine learning models, the Random Forest Classifier and the Decision Tree Classifier, to enhance its performance in distinguishing genuine and fake Instagram accounts.
* The system is implemented using Python, which offers a rich ecosystem of libraries and tools for data preprocessing, modeling, and evaluation. Python's flexibility and extensive machine learning libraries make it an ideal choice for this project.
* The proposed system harnesses the power of two machine learning algorithms, the Random Forest Classifier and the Decision Tree Classifier, to collectively evaluate Instagram profiles for authenticity.
* Random Forest Classifier model achieves a remarkable 100% accuracy on the training dataset and a strong 93% accuracy on the test dataset, demonstrating its ability to generalize well and make accurate predictions.
* The Decision Tree Classifier exhibits a training accuracy of 92% and a test accuracy of 92%, further validating its suitability for the task of fake account detection.
* The system operates on a dataset comprising 576 records, each enriched with 12 unique features that capture various aspects of Instagram profiles. These features include: Profile pic, Nums/length username, Fullname words, Nums/length fullname, Name==username, Description length, External URL, Private, #Posts, #Followers, #Follows, Fake,
* The proposed system builds upon the strengths of the existing system, which achieved impressive accuracy levels, while also addressing potential limitations. It incorporates algorithm diversity, robust feature engineering, interpretability, adaptability to emerging threats, and enhanced efficiency to deliver a comprehensive and effective solution for Instagram fake account detection. This system is designed to contribute to the security and trustworthiness of the Instagram platform.

**ADVANTAGES OF PROPOSED SYSTEM:**

* Enhanced Accuracy: The proposed system achieves high accuracy, with the Random Forest Classifier achieving Accuracy Train Score: 100% and Test Score: 93% and the Decision Tree Classifier achieving Accuracy Train Score: 92% and Test Score: 92%. This improved accuracy ensures more reliable fake account identification.
* Algorithm Diversity: By utilizing both Random Forest and Decision Tree classifiers, the system benefits from the strengths of multiple machine learning algorithms. This diversity enhances the system's ability to handle a wide range of profile characteristics and data patterns.
* Robust Feature Engineering: The proposed system incorporates advanced feature engineering techniques to extract relevant information from Instagram profiles. This comprehensive feature set provides a more holistic view of user behavior, leading to more accurate fake account detection.
* Interpretability and Explainability: The system incorporates methods for model interpretability and explainability, making it easier for users and administrators to understand why a particular account was categorized as fake. This transparency enhances trust in the system.
* Adaptability to Emerging Threats: The system is designed to adapt to evolving threats and new tactics used by malicious actors to create fake Instagram accounts. Regular model retraining and data monitoring keep the system up to date with the latest challenges.
* Scalability and Efficiency: Efforts to optimize computational resources and reduce inference times make the system more scalable and efficient. This is crucial for handling large volumes of Instagram profiles in real-time or near-real-time scenarios.
* Content Analysis: The proposed system incorporates text and image analysis to detect fake accounts that primarily rely on textual content, image-based deception, or multimedia manipulation. This multi-modal analysis provides a more comprehensive assessment of account authenticity.
* Privacy and User Experience Considerations: The system prioritizes the privacy and user experience of genuine Instagram users. Mechanisms are in place to minimize the risk of mistakenly flagging legitimate accounts, which helps maintain user satisfaction and trust.
* Reliable Data Balancing: The proposed system employs techniques for data balancing to address the challenges of imbalanced datasets. This ensures that the system does not disproportionately favor one class (e.g., genuine accounts) over the other.
* Multi-Algorithm Evaluation: The use of both Random Forest and Decision Tree classifiers allows for cross-validation and cross-referencing of results, leading to more confident and accurate fake account detection.
* Improved Generalization: The system's ability to maintain high accuracy on the test dataset (93% for Random Forest and 92% for Decision Tree) indicates its strong generalization capabilities, reducing the risk of overfitting.
* Reduced False Positives and Negatives: With its enhanced accuracy and robust feature engineering, the proposed system minimizes the likelihood of false positives (genuine accounts misclassified as fake) and false negatives (fake accounts misclassified as genuine).

These advantages collectively position the proposed system as a comprehensive and effective solution for Instagram fake account detection, contributing to the platform's overall security, integrity, and user trust.

**SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE:**

Predicted Results: Fake or Real Account

Dataset

Random Forest Classifier, Decision Tree Classifier.

Performance Analysis and Graph

**SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:**

**HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS:**

* System : Pentium i3 Processor.
* Hard Disk : 500 GB.
* Monitor : 15’’ LED.
* Input Devices : Keyboard, Mouse.
* Ram : 8 GB.

**SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS:**

* Operating system : Windows 10 Pro.
* Coding Language : Python 3.10.9.
* Web Framework : Flask.
* Frontend : HTML, CSS, JavaScript.

**REFERENCE:**

Dr. M. Sirish Kumar, Dr Jasmine Sabeena, Konduru Manasa Veena, Kummari Pavan, Malepati Sukavya, Kundavaram Sravanthi, “Fake Profile Detection on Social Networking Websites using Machine Learning”, 2023 International Conference on Sustainable Computing and Smart Systems (ICSCSS), IEEE Conference, 2023.