

MACHINE LEARNING APPROACH FOR THE PREDICTION OF THE STATUS OF TANZANIAN WELLS [COMP4030 CW2 - Data Science and Machine Learning]

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Abstract—This paper details our approaches and results for the COMP4030 CW2. We have used a number of machine learning algorithms in order to predict the status ('Functional', 'Functional - Needs Repair' & 'Non-Functional') of water wells in Tanzania. This is important as not only does knowing the status of the well help keep the total percentage of functioning wells higher, but it also allows for more effective spending from the government as they no longer would have to send workers out to check the status of the well. Our results suggested that the most important features were ADD RESULTS, and the best classification model as ADD RESULTS

Index Terms—Machine Learning, Data Science, Classification

I. INTRODUCTION

This section will provide an introduction to the dataset and the research questions we have attempted to solve.

A. Research Questions

We have decided that our research question will be:

What factors are most important for determining the status of a well, and how accurately can we classify wells based on these features?

We choose this question because we are interested in the factors that determine the status of a well, and using ML to try to classify these wells into 1 of 3 classes: Functional, Non-Functional & Functional Needs Repair. From this question, we can think about some follow-up questions. These could include:

- How does the accuracy of the classification model vary with different feature sets and classification algorithms?
- Could we use our results to ensure that wells are built and repaired so that fewer wells are non-functional?

B. Dataset

We will be using the dataset from the Tanzanian Ministry of Water, which contains information on the status of wells in Tanzania to answer our research question. This dataset has 59400 rows, with 40 different features. These 40 features could

be broken down into three subgroups which hold information regarding: a) Geographic Location of the Wells. b) Management of the wells. and c) Water Condition of the wells. The dataset is originally split into 2 different files, one for labels and one for the actual data. These can be merged easily with pandas through left join on the "ID" column.

Fig. 1 shows the distribution of the target variable, which is the status of the well. We can see from this that we might need to oversample the 'functional needs repair' class.

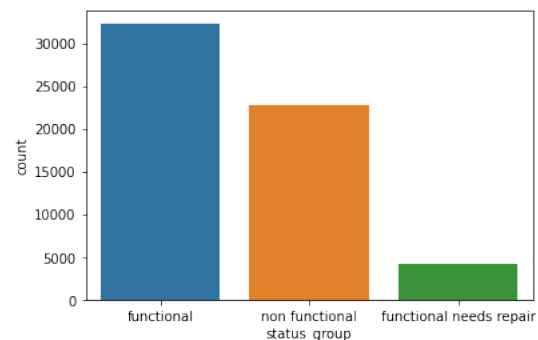


Fig. 1: Distribution of the target variable

C. Management Structure

Talk about the christmas tree structure of our approach to solving this problem.

Talk about Author Name comments

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, we review the relevant literature on predicting machine failure, with a focus on studies that have used similar datasets to Pump It Up. Predicting machine failure is an important area of research, as it has the potential to reduce downtime and maintenance costs. Some machines may be part of a critical infrastructure, so preventing them from failure is of utmost importance.

One study by Pathak et al. (2023) [7] compared the performance of TabNet, a sequential attentive classification architecture designed for tabular data, and tree-based approaches such as XGBoost. They found that TabNet outperformed XGBoost, boasting an 83% accuracy compared to XGBoost 78%. TabNet makes use of Transformers, a machine learning algorithm which uses self-attention to differentially weight the significance of each part of the input. A point of note is that TabNet does not require feature engineering to perform at these standards. While TabNet is an interesting solution, we have not used it in our report, as our primary goal was to showcase an end-to-end machine learning solution, and this includes feature engineering.

Jabeur et al [5] conducted a detailed review of different algorithms for predicting financial distress, including, SVMs, Neural Networks, RandomForest, XGBoost & CatBoost. They found that the ensemble methods worked the most effectively (RandomForest, XGBoost & CatBoost). Ensemble methods combine multiple models in order to improve accuracy.

Similarly, Mahabub [6] investigated the effectiveness of ensemble methods to detect fake news. They found that combining different classification methods into a Ensemble Voting Classifier produced the best results.

Finally, Celikmih et al [4] used classification models to predict the failure of aircraft equipment and employed the ReliefF feature selection algorithm. This algorithm estimates feature weights iteratively, according to their ability to make a distinction between neighboring models. They used this to select the best subset of features to feed into their classification model, resulting in the best performance.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Data Analysis

When conducting data analysis, the python library Seaborn [8] was our primary data visualization tool. We found that Seaborn produces more visually appealing graphs than those produced by Matplotlib and the library itself is simpler to use. We used this alongside Pandas [1], a python library for advanced data handling. The results obtained from our initial data analysis guided our pre-processing decisions. (See IV for detailed results).

1) *Thomas*: Thomas produced visualizations of the water-point & management type distributions for each decade as well as a line chart plotting count against construction-year. The objective behind these graphs was to determine the possibility of using other values in the dataset to fill in the missing construction year data. This be discussed further in IV

B. Data Preprocessing

During the pre-processing phase, we followed our Christmas tree planning approach, working separately before combining our respective results. We each tried different techniques for pre-processing to determine the optimal ones. We both used pandas techniques to format the data in the format we wanted. Pandas is fast data manipulation tool, which makes it perfect

for this problem. In this phase, we also implemented feature engineering and data cleaning approaches.

1) *Thomas*: Thomas initially performed the imputation of the latitude & longitude missing values by applying mean imputation with a specific approach. Firstly, the data was grouped by 'ward', followed by calculating the mean for the missing lat/lon values. If any NaNs remained (e.g. due to missing 'ward' information), then the data was grouped by 'LGA' and the process repeated. Finally, the data was grouped by 'region', ensuring no missing values were left. The will be discussed further in IV.

He also looked at the Funder & Installer columns, which contained 1000s of unique values. In his approach, he decided to group the column into Seven categories: 'Charity', 'Government', 'Local Government', 'Private', 'Religious', 'Foreign' & 'School'. This was done to simplify the dataset, making it easier for the model to learn the distribution. Finally, Thomas also used the SMOTE-ENN algorithm from imblearn [3], to balanced the imbalance in the 'Functional - Needs Repair' class. Imbalanced datasets could potentially affect model performance, especially in tree-based models.

C. Data Classification

To classify the data, we utilized various classification algorithms. Initially, our focus was on testing the performance of different algorithms without any feature selection. This would allows us to focus on the best performing ones. The results from this test can be seen in Table. I. From these results, we can see that XGBoostClassifier, CatBoostClassifier, BaggingClassifier & HistGradientBoostingClassifier were the most effective for our problem. We decided to fully explore these models using feature selection & hyper-parameter tuning. Our feature selection process employed a Chi-Squared test and feature importance obtained from a RandomForest to generate a subset of potential features.

TABLE I: Initial Classification Results

Algorithm	Accuracy	Precision	Recall
XGB	0.797811	0.751084	0.632675
CatBoost	0.794865	0.745754	0.633800
Bagging	0.793434	0.704477	0.658841
HistGradientBoosting	0.790909	0.743381	0.623847
DT	0.756902	0.643165	0.644585
KNN	0.708754	0.623125	0.563458

1) *Thomas*: Initially, Thomas followed on from the decision to balance the dataset. He trained the 4 top models (XGBoost, CatBoost, Bagging & HGBost) on the balanced dataset and compared the results to models trained on the un-balanced dataset. The results can be seen in IV. Furthermore, he used Weights and Biases (WandB) [2] to further analyse the subset of features produced by the Chi-Squared Test and RandomForest. WandB provided an easy-to-use MLOps platform for tracking our experiments and helped us understand which features worked best for each classifier. He trained multiple classifiers on different subsets of the feature set (ranging from sizes 0.75N to N, where N is the size of the original feature

set), and tracked this information in WandB. WandB allows us to quickly filter for the best performing 'runs', and find out which feature set was used in this run. He also used WandB to further analyse the results of our cross-validation hyper-parameter tuning, in much a similar process to feature selection.

IV. RESULTS

A. *Data Analysis*

B. *Data Preprocessing*

C. *Classification*

V. DISCUSSION

VI. CONCLUSION

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