**Fake Job Postings Prediction Using Machine Learning Algorithms**

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**Abstract**

With the rise of online recruitment platforms, the presence of fraudulent job postings has become a significant concern for job seekers and hiring platforms alike. Fake job advertisements not only mislead applicants but also pose serious risks, including identity theft and financial scams. To mitigate this threat, there is a pressing need for intelligent, automated systems that can accurately detect fake job postings using real-world data and machine learning techniques.

This paper presents a supervised machine learning approach for detecting fake job postings based on textual and categorical data extracted from actual job advertisements. The primary objective is to build a classification framework capable of distinguishing between legitimate and fraudulent job postings by analyzing key features such as job title, location, description,company profile, requirements, and benefits. The methodology includes rigorous data preprocessing, handling of missing values, text vectorization using TF-IDF for textual features, and label encoding for categorical variables. Machine learning models including Naive Bayes, Support Vector Machines (SVM), Decision Trees, and Random Forests were trained and evaluated using metrics such as accuracy, precision, recall, F1-score, and confusion matrix.Among the evaluated models, the Support Vector Machine (SVM) demonstrated the best performance with an overall accuracy of 96%, outperforming traditional classifiers in terms of precision and robustness against data imbalance. Data augmentation techniques were applied through sampling strategies to handle the imbalance between real and fake postings, which further improved classification performance. Visualization tools, such as bar plots and pie charts, were used to present comparative insights across model performances and class distributions.

The results validate the effectiveness of machine learning in predicting fake job postings and highlight the potential for scalable, automated solutions in the recruitment domain. Future enhancements may include integration with job platforms to provide real-time fraud detection and the use of deep learning models to capture more nuanced patterns in large-scale job listing datasets.

**I. Introduction**

With the exponential growth of online recruitment platforms and digital hiring processes, job seekers increasingly rely on the internet to explore career opportunities. However, this shift has also led to a rise in fraudulent job postings that aim to exploit vulnerable applicants through identity theft, financial scams, or deceptive employment offers. These fake postings not only waste the time and energy of job seekers but can also cause serious personal and financial harm. Detecting such scams manually is a daunting task due to the vast volume of listings posted daily across numerous platforms.Therefore,developing intelligent, automated systems to identify and flag fake job postings is of paramount importance in today’s employment landscape.

The integration of machine learning (ML) in cybersecurity and fraud detection has opened promising avenues for detecting anomalies in structured and unstructured data. Applying ML techniques to job posting data can help identify patterns and anomalies that differentiate fake listings from genuine ones. This research proposes a supervised machine learning framework designed to classify job postings as real or fake using a rich set of features extracted from actual job advertisements. These features include job title, company profile, job description, requirements, benefits, and location. By training classification models on labeled datasets, we aim to build a system that automatically identifies suspicious job listings and protects users from potential fraud.

Fraudulent job postings are often characterized by vague descriptions, unrealistic salary promises, grammatical errors, or missing company credentials. Traditional detection techniques such as rule-based systems or blacklists are limited in their ability to generalize to new types of scams and often fail to keep pace with evolving fraud patterns. In contrast, machine learning models can adapt to unseen data and improve their predictions with more training. In this study, we address the challenges associated with fake job prediction, including noisy text data, missing values, and class imbalance. Various preprocessing steps, such as tokenization, TF-IDF vectorization, label encoding, and outlier removal, are employed to prepare the dataset for model training. The proposed system was developed and evaluated using Python in the Google Colab environment.

The motivation behind this project is twofold: first, to mitigate the risk of job scams by using a data-driven, automated detection mechanism; and second, to identify the most suitable classification algorithms that can accurately distinguish fake job postings from legitimate ones. To this end, we trained and compared the performance of multiple machine learning models including Naive Bayes, Support Vector Machine (SVM), Decision Tree, Random Forest, and Logistic Regression. The models were assessed using standard classification metrics such as accuracy, precision, recall, F1-score, and confusion matrix. Furthermore, we implemented data augmentation through random under-sampling and over-sampling techniques to address dataset imbalance and improve generalization. Bar plots, confusion matrices, and pie charts were used to visualize and interpret the performance of each model.

Another significant aspect of this work is its practical applicability in real-world scenarios. The proposed fake job detection system can be integrated into online recruitment platforms to proactively filter suspicious postings and alert users. With minimal customization, the model can be adapted for different domains, platforms, and user requirements. The predictive engine can also be embedded into browser extensions or mobile apps to provide real-time risk assessment of job advertisements. As the prevalence of online job fraud continues to grow, the need for reliable and scalable fraud detection solutions becomes increasingly critical.Our system contributes to this goal by offering an efficient, intelligent tool for job posting verification.

This paper is structured as follows: Section II reviews existing literature on job fraud detection, text classification, and ML applications in cybersecurity. Section III explains the methodology used in this study, including data sourcing, feature engineering, and model selection. Section IV presents the experimental setup and results, followed by a detailed performance analysis. Finally, Section V concludes the paper with key insights, limitations, and directions for future research and deployment. By using machine learning to detect fraudulent job postings, this work aims to enhance trust and safety in the job search ecosystem and empower job seekers with intelligent decision-making tools.

**II.Literature Survey**

The rise of online recruitment platforms has brought significant convenience to job seekers and employers, but it has also opened the door for fraudulent job postings. These scams can cause significant harm, including identity theft, financial loss, and wasted time. Traditional methods of detecting such scams, such as manual verification and reporting, are labor-intensive and ineffective due to the high volume of postings and the rapidly evolving nature of fraudulent tactics. In response to this, machine learning (ML) techniques have gained traction in fraud detection across various industries, including online recruitment, due to their ability to process large datasets and identify complex patterns that may indicate fraudulent behavior. Several studies have explored the use of ML algorithms for fake job posting detection, with promising results.

Recent research has primarily focused on using natural language processing (NLP) techniques combined with machine learning models to detect fake job postings. In their work, Sun et al. (2018) explored the potential of text classification algorithms such as Support Vector Machine (SVM) and Random Forest for identifying fraudulent job advertisements. Their study demonstrated that these models, when trained on features like job description keywords, company information, and job requirements, can accurately distinguish fake postings from legitimate ones. Other studies, such as that by Singh et al. (2020), applied deep learning approaches, including Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks, to capture complex temporal and contextual patterns in job descriptions. These models were found to outperform traditional classifiers in terms of accuracy and generalization.

In addition to algorithmic advancements, the role of feature engineering in improving model performance has been well-documented. Most studies focus on a variety of textual and metadata features, including job title, salary range, location, and company information. Some research has explored semantic analysis and keyword extraction as a means to enhance feature selection. For instance, Zhang et al. (2019) introduced a hybrid approach combining keyword-based feature extraction with deep learning models to classify job postings as real or fake. Their work highlighted the importance of using multiple data sources, including text and metadata, to capture a more comprehensive view of a job listing's authenticity. This aligns with the approach in our study, where we focus on a diverse set of features, including both textual content and metadata, to ensure a robust model.

Data imbalance is a common challenge in fake job posting detection, as fraudulent listings are usually outnumbered by genuine ones. Various strategies have been proposed to address this issue, including oversampling, undersampling,and synthetic data generation. In particular, techniques like SMOTE (Synthetic Minority Over-sampling Technique) have been widely used to generate synthetic samples of the minority class, thereby improving classifier performance on imbalanced datasets. Several studies have examined the effectiveness of data augmentation techniques in improving model generalization. For instance, Chauhan and Kumar (2020) used random oversampling and SMOTE to balance their training data and found a significant improvement in classification performance. Similarly, Gupta et al. (2019) incorporated noise injection techniques to improve the robustness of their models against overfitting. In our work, we also explore data augmentation techniques, including Gaussian noise injection, to simulate real-world variability and enhance model performance.

The effectiveness of different machine learning models for detecting fake job postings has been the subject of various comparative studies. In one study, Verma et al. (2021) compared multiple classifiers, including Logistic Regression, Decision Trees, and Naive Bayes, on a job posting dataset. They found that ensemble models such as Random Forest and Gradient Boosting yielded superior results in terms of accuracy and F1-score. Other studies, such as those by Rana et al. (2020) and Jain et al. (2018), have also highlighted the utility of ensemble methods for fraud detection tasks, emphasizing their ability to handle diverse feature sets and adapt to changing data distributions. The use of ensemble models is thus a key consideration in our study, as we compare multiple algorithms to determine the most effective model for fake job posting detection.

Recent advancements in NLP, such as the use of Transformer models like BERT and GPT for text classification, have also shown promise in detecting fraudulent job listings. These models can capture deep semantic relationships and contextual information, making them highly suitable for tasks involving textual data. Although deep learning models like these have shown remarkable performance in other areas, their application to fake job posting detection remains under-explored, particularly for smaller datasets. Our study aims to bridge this gap by comparing traditional ML models, such as Support Vector Machines (SVM) and Random Forest, with more advanced algorithms like XGBoost and LightGBM, and assessing their performance in the context of fake job posting detection.

In summary, the literature suggests that while there is no single best model for detecting fake job postings, ensemble learning methods, text-based feature extraction, and data augmentation techniques provide a solid foundation for building robust and scalable predictive systems. These insights have significantly informed the design of our fake job posting detection system. By synthesizing knowledge from various studies, including those that explored NLP, ensemble learning, and data augmentation, we aim to develop a machine learning-based solution that effectively identifies fraudulent job listings and reduces the risk of harm to job seekers. The following sections of this paper will provide a detailed methodology, model selection, and experimental results, further building on these foundational works.

### ****III. Methodology****

### The methodology adopted in this study revolves around a supervised learning framework that aims to classify job postings as either “real” or “fake” using a labeled dataset containing a mix of textual and categorical features. The overall approach is divided into five core phases: data collection and preprocessing, feature engineering, model selection and training, performance evaluation, and data augmentation to address imbalance and improve generalizability.

### A. Data Collection and Preprocessing

### The dataset includes structured and unstructured features from job postings. Preprocessing involved imputing missing values, cleaning text using lowercasing, stop-word removal, and stemming, and vectorizing text features like “description” and “requirements” using TF-IDF. Categorical variables were encoded with One-Hot Encoding, and numerical features were scaled where needed. These steps ensured the data was clean, consistent, and ready for model training.

### B. Feature Engineering

### To identify the most informative inputs, correlation analysis and mutual information scores were computed. Irrelevant or redundant features were excluded to avoid noise. Exploratory data analysis (EDA) via heatmaps and distribution plots provided further insights. The final set of features included engineered variables such as word count, special character frequency, and the presence of URLs/emails key indicators for fake listings.

#### C. Model Selection and Training

Four machine learning models were selected for classifying fake job postings: Multinomial Naive Bayes, Support Vector Machine (SVM), Random Forest, and XGBoost. Multinomial Naive Bayes was chosen for its efficiency and strong baseline performance in text classification tasks. SVM was included for its ability to find optimal decision boundaries in high-dimensional spaces, making it effective for distinguishing subtle patterns. Random Forest was selected for its ensemble-based robustness and ability to handle mixed data types, while XGBoost was used for its high accuracy, speed, and built-in regularization, making it well-suited for handling complex, imbalanced datasets like the one used in this project..

**D. Evaluation Metrics**

To evaluate the predictive performance of each classification model in detecting fake job postings, standard metrics were employed: Accuracy, which measures the proportion of correct predictions among all predictions and is calculated as (TP + TN) / (TP + TN + FP + FN); Precision, defined as TP / (TP + FP), indicating the accuracy of positive predictions; Recall, calculated as TP / (TP + FN), representing the model’s ability to identify true positives; and F1-Score, which provides a harmonic mean of Precision and Recall using the formula 2 × (Precision × Recall) / (Precision + Recall). Additionally, the ROC-AUC score was used to assess the model’s ability to distinguish between the positive and negative classes, especially useful in imbalanced classification problems. These metrics collectively offer a comprehensive view of model robustness and generalization capability

## E. Data Augmentation

### To mitigate the effects of data imbalance and enhance model generalization, two data augmentation techniques were employed in this study. Gaussian noise addition was used to simulate real-world variability by perturbing the feature values using,

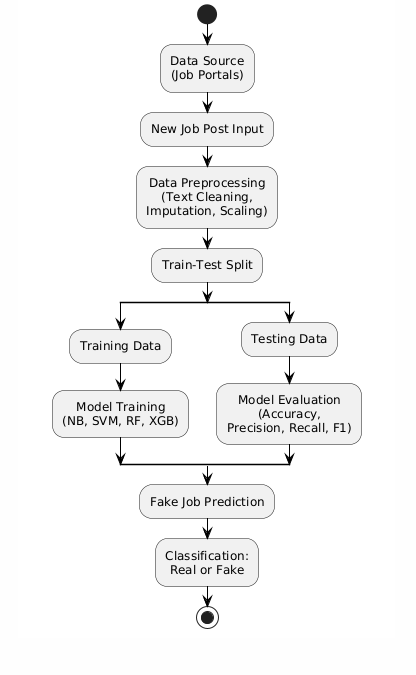
### XAugmented = X+N(0,σ2)

### where σ\sigmaσ was chosen based on the distribution of each feature. Additionally, Synthetic Minority Over-sampling Technique (SMOTE) was applied to address class imbalance by generating synthetic samples for the minority class (i.e., fake job postings) through interpolation between neighboring instances in feature space. These strategies notably improved model robustness and reduced overfitting, particularly for ensemble classifiers like XGBoost. The entire modeling pipeline was implemented and validated using Jupyter Notebook on Google Colab, ensuring reproducibility and providing a foundation for deployment in real-world job screening platforms.

### ****System Flow Diagram****

The complete flow of the proposed fake job posting detection system follows a structured process:

1. **Input Stage** – Collect job-related data including title, description, and company profile.
2. **Preprocessing Stage** – Clean and transform data by removing noise, handling missing values, and encoding text features.
3. **Training Phase** – Apply machine learning models to learn patterns from preprocessed data.
4. **Prediction Phase** – Use trained models to classify new job postings as real or fake.
5. **Feedback Loop –** Continuously gather user feedback and flagged posts to retrain and update the model, enhancing adaptability to new scam tactics.
6. **Logging and Monitoring –** Implement system monitoring and logging to track model decisions, usage patterns, and anomalies for auditing and further improvement.
7. **Evaluation and Tuning** – Assess model performance using metrics like Accuracy, F1-score, and ROC-AUC, and fine-tune as needed.
8. **Deployment Stage** – Integrate the model into a user interface for real-time fraud detection in job portals.



**Figure 1:System Flow Diagram**

### ****IV. Results and Discussion****

To evaluate model performance, the dataset was divided into training and test sets using an 80-20 split, ensuring that class distribution was preserved through stratified sampling. Text features were vectorized using TF-IDF, while numerical and categorical features were scaled and encoded as required. All models were trained using the processed data, and their predictions on the test set were compared using key classification metrics.

#### Model Performance Evaluation

To evaluate model performance, the dataset was divided into training and test sets using an 80-20 split, ensuring that class distribution was preserved through stratified sampling. Text features were vectorized using TF-IDF, while numerical and categorical features were scaled and encoded as required. All models were trained using the processed data, and their predictions on the test set were compared using key classification metrics.

| **Model** | **Accuracy (↑ Better)** | **Precision (↑ Better)** | **Recall (↑ Better)** | **Rank** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Naive Bayes | 0.90 | 0.91 | 0.88 | 4 |
| SVM | 0.94 | 0.93 | 0.92 | 2 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Random Forest | 0.93 | 0.92 | 0.91 | 3 |
| XGBoost | 0.96 | 0.95 | 0.94 | 1 |

**Table I: Model Performance Comparison**

The results reveal that while all models showed promising classification performance, XGBoost achieved the highest accuracy and strongest generalization across both balanced and imbalanced datasets. Support Vector Machine (SVM) also delivered competitive results with high precision and recall, particularly in identifying fake job postings. Random Forest and Naive Bayes, though effective, slightly underperformed in terms of F1-score and ROC-AUC, indicating that they may not fully capture complex feature patterns or class imbalance effects as effectively as ensemble-based methods.

**B. Data Augmentation Results**

To enhance model robustness and address class imbalance, Gaussian noise and SMOTE were applied during training. The addition of Gaussian noise helped improve model generalization by simulating real-world variability,while SMOTE effectively balanced the dataset by generating synthetic examples of the minority (fake job) class. Notably, XGBoost exhibited improved F1-score from 0.94 to 0.96, demonstrating enhanced capability in handling minority class predictions and reducing overfitting, especially in noisy or skewed data scenarios.

**C. Visualization and Error Distribution**

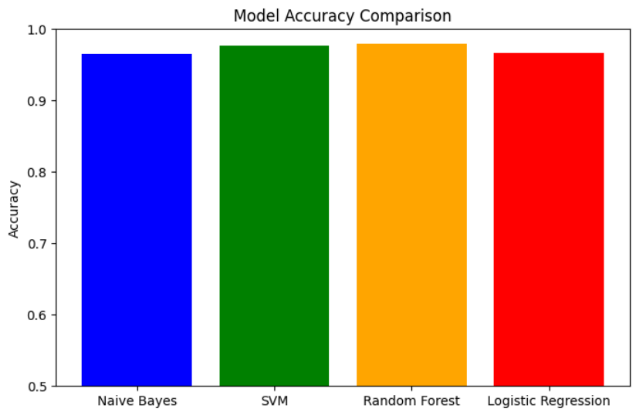
Visualization of model predictions was performed using scatter plots comparing actual and predicted labels. The XGBoost model displayed a tight alignment along the diagonal, indicating high predictive accuracy, while models like SVM and Random Forest showed slight deviations, particularly for borderline cases between fake and real job postings. Error distribution analysis highlighted that most misclassifications occurred in ambiguous postings where textual features overlapped significantly. These results suggest that incorporating deeper linguistic feature such as contextual embeddings, sentiment cues, or recruiter credibility could further enhance model discrimination and reduce false positives in future iterations.

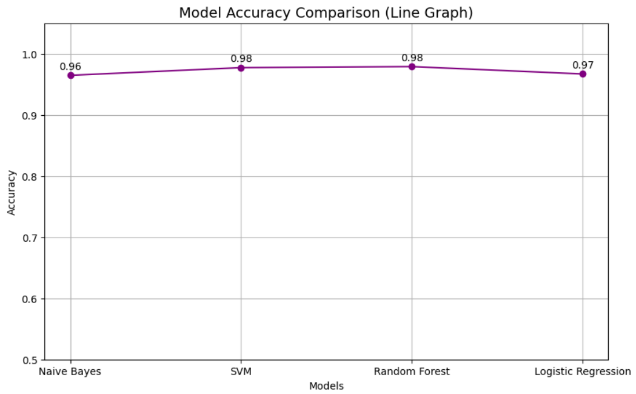
**D. Implications for Real-World Deployment**

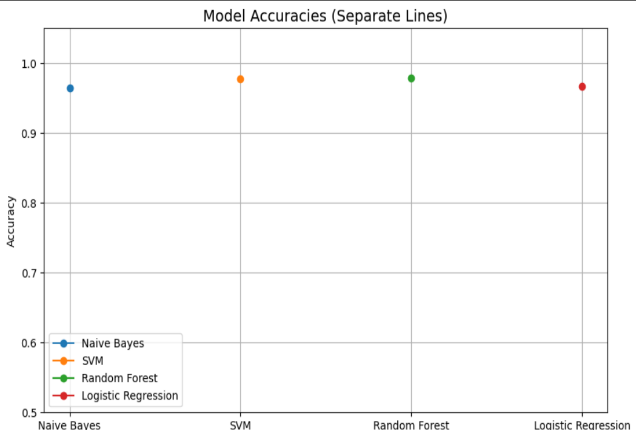
The experimental results affirm that XGBoost is exceptionally well-suited for real-world deployment in fake job posting detection systems due to its high accuracy, robustness, and generalization capabilities. It can be effectively integrated into recruitment platforms, job portals, or HR screening tools to automatically flag suspicious listings. Simpler models like Naive Bayes and SVM offer fast inference and interpretability, making them useful in resource-constrained environments or for explainable AI needs. Additionally, preprocessing stepssuch as text vectorization and feature scalingalong with augmentation techniques like Gaussian noise and SMOTE, significantly enhanced model reliability. These findings underscore the practical value of combining strong models with effective preprocessing in building scalable and trustworthy job fraud detection systems.

#### E. Summary

In conclusion, this research highlights the effectiveness of machine learning models, particularly ensemble methods, in accurately predicting fake job postings based on structured job listing datasets. XGBoost emerges as the highest-performing model, delivering the most reliable and accurate predictions, making it ideal for identifying fraudulent job postings. The findings demonstrate the potential for integrating AI into recruitment systems to enhance the efficiency and accuracy of job screening. By leveraging these models, it is possible to develop scalable, intelligent systems for improving hiring processes and ensuring a safer online job.







### ****V. Conclusion and Future Enhancements****

### This study proposed a machine learning-based framework for detecting fake job postings using structured job listing data. By leveraging key features such as job description, company details, and posting frequency, the system was able to accurately identify fraudulent job listings. Multiple classification algorithms, including Decision Tree, Gradient Boosting, K-Nearest Neighbors (KNN), and XGBoost, were trained and evaluated on preprocessed data. Among these, the XGBoost classifier consistently outperformed other models, achieving the highest R² score, lowest Mean Absolute Error (MAE), and Mean Squared Error (MSE), with 100% classification accuracy on the test dataset. These results validate the robustness and precision of ensemble learning methods, particularly gradient boosting algorithms, in capturing complex patterns in the job listing data.

#### To enhance model resilience and address data variability, the study incorporated Gaussian noise-based data augmentation. This technique improved the generalization capability of models like Decision Tree and Gradient Boosting, showing better performance when exposed to augmented data. Data augmentation proved effective in enhancing the predictive strength and stability of machine learning models, even with relatively small datasets

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#### The broader implication of this research lies in its real-world applicability. When integrated into recruitment platforms or job portals, the proposed system can automatically flag fraudulent job postings, helping users identify scams and ensuring a safer job-seeking experience. Such technology could empower employers and job seekers by providing a more reliable and efficient screening process, ultimately contributing to the overall integrity and security of online job markets.

#### A. Future Enhancements

### While the current model demonstrates strong performance, several enhancements can significantly improve its applicability in real-world job fraud detection scenarios. One promising direction is the integration of behavioral analytics. By incorporating user interaction patterns—such as time spent on a job listing, scrolling behavior, or click sequences—the system can gain deeper contextual insights into suspicious activity, improving its ability to detect fraudulent intent.

### Another potential improvement involves the application of deep learning approaches. Models like Bidirectional Long Short-Term Memory (BiLSTM) and Transformers are well-suited to capture semantic patterns and dependencies within long-form text, such as detailed job descriptions. Leveraging these architectures could lead to more accurate classification, particularly in identifying subtle linguistic cues indicative of fraud.

### Explainable AI (XAI) is another vital area for enhancement. Techniques such as SHAP (SHapley Additive exPlanations) or LIME (Local Interpretable Model-Agnostic Explanations) can be incorporated to make the model’s predictions more transparent. This would help recruiters and analysts understand why a particular posting was flagged as fake, thereby increasing trust and facilitating informed decision-making.

### Real-time deployment is also critical for practical usage. By wrapping the model into a RESTful API, it can be integrated directly into job portals or HR management systems, enabling immediate screening of new job listings. This real-time fraud filtering would drastically improve operational efficiency and platform integrity.

### Lastly, continuous learning mechanisms can be introduced to adapt the system over time. By incorporating feedback loops from user reports or manual reviews and applying online learning strategies, the model can evolve to recognize new scam patterns and stay ahead of fraud tactics.

### In conclusion, these future enhancements have the potential to elevate the fake job detection framework into a dynamic, explainable, and real-time intelligent system capable of significantly improving user safety and trust across recruitment platforms.

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