

SMART GRID ELECTRICITY THEFT DETECTION

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

Submitted by

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in partial fulfillment for the award of the degree of

BACHELOR OF TECHNOLOGY

IN

COMPUTER SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING



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SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

KALASALINGAM ACADEMY OF

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

KRISHNANKOIL 626 126

Academic Year 2025-2026

DECLARATION

I affirm that the project work titled “**SMART GRID ELECTRICITY THEFT DETECTION**” being submitted in partial fulfillment for the award of the degree of **Bachelor of Technology in Computer Science and Engineering** is the original work carried out by us. It has not formed the part of any other project work submitted for award of any degree or diploma, either in this or any other University.

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BONAFIDE CERTIFICATE

Certified that this project report “SMART GRID ELECTRICITY THEFT DETECTION” is the bonafide work of “SUNKARA PRABHU RAM KARUNYA” who carried out the project work under my supervision.

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School of Computing

Department of Computer Science and Engineering Project

Summary

Project Title	SMART GRID ELECTRICITY THEFT DETECTION	
Project Team Members (Name with Register No)	1.SUNKARA PRABHU RAM KARUNYA (99230040170)	
Guide Name/Designation	Mr.Surendrin Muthukumar, Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Science and Engineering	
Program Concentration Area	Detect electricity theft from smart meter data, improving energy monitoring, revenue assurance, and operational efficiency.	
Technical Requirements	Streamlit application with Random Forest, XGBoost, and LightGBM for real-time electricity theft detection using smart meter data.	
Engineering standards and realistic constraints in these areas: (Refer Appendix in page 4 of this doc.)		
Area	Codes & Standards / Realistic Constraints	Tick ✓
Economic		✓
Environmental		✓
Social		✓
Ethical		✓
Health and Safety		✓
Manufacturability		✓
Sustainability		✓

Realistic Constraints

Economic:

The Electricity Theft Detection System must balance prediction accuracy and computational cost to minimize energy losses while keeping deployment economically feasible for utility providers.

Environment:

The system is designed to process large volumes of smart meter data efficiently, reducing server load and energy consumption. Optimized ML algorithms like Random Forest, XGBoost, and LightGBM make the system environmentally sustainable.

Social:

By detecting electricity theft, the system protects honest consumers from unfair charges and ensures reliable energy supply, maintaining public trust in the smart grid ecosystem.

Ethical:

Sensitive energy consumption data is handled according to privacy standards, ensuring ethical AI deployment and compliance with regulations.

Health and Safety:

Reducing electricity theft helps prevent grid instability and blackouts, promoting safety for consumers and energy infrastructure.

Manufacturability / Deployability:

The models are deployable on standard IT infrastructure in utility companies, allowing integration without additional hardware or complex setup costs.

Sustainability:

The system uses scalable ML models that efficiently utilize computing resources, ensuring long-term operation with minimal environmental and operational impact.

Engineering Standards

- Complies with international standards for AI-based anomaly and theft detection in energy systems.
- Ensures secure handling of consumer electricity usage data according to privacy and cybersecurity regulations.
- Uses ML models (Random Forest, XGBoost, LightGBM) for high accuracy, scalability, and against

imbalanced datasets.

- Supports near real-time detection, continuous learning, and performance monitoring to adapt to evolving theft patterns.
- Evaluation metrics such as Accuracy, F1-score, Precision, Recall, and ROC-AUC ensure standardized and reliable model assessment.

ABSTRACT

Smart grids and smart meters have made electricity supply more efficient and reliable. They allow utility companies to monitor energy usage in real time. However, these systems are also vulnerable to electricity theft. People can tamper with meters, bypass them, or exploit software weaknesses. This leads to large financial losses, disrupts power supply, and makes it harder for providers to manage electricity efficiently. This project focuses on detecting electricity theft using Machine Learning. We use smart meter data, including electricity and gas usage, heating, cooling, and other energy-related readings. Three models are tested: Random Forest, XGBoost, and LightGBM. Since theft cases are much fewer than normal usage, we use SMOTE (Synthetic Minority Oversampling Technique) to balance the dataset. The models are evaluated using Accuracy, Precision, Recall, F1-score, and ROC-AUC. The results show that the best model can identify electricity theft accurately and quickly. This system can help utility providers reduce losses, improve revenue, and maintain a stable and reliable electricity supply. This project demonstrates how Machine Learning can help protect energy resources, make electricity distribution fairer, and support sustainable energy management. The system is simple, efficient, and can be deployed easily for real-time monitoring.

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

Smart grids are modern electricity networks that allow real-time monitoring of energy consumption through smart meters. These meters record hourly electricity usage for various appliances like heating, cooling, fans, lights, and interior equipment. They also measure gas and water consumption in some cases. The data is sent continuously to utility companies, enabling accurate billing, better load management, and efficient energy usage.

However, electricity theft is a major problem in smart grids. Some users manipulate meters, bypass them, or exploit software weaknesses to reduce their bills. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), electricity theft causes billions of dollars in losses annually, disrupting grid stability and company revenues.

To address this, our project focuses on using Machine Learning to detect theft automatically. We have used a dataset called “Theft Detection in Smart Grid Environment”, which contains 560,655 rows and 13 columns. The dataset records hourly energy consumption for 16 types of consumers over a year. Importantly, it also includes six types of simulated theft where consumption is reduced, set to zero, averaged, randomized, or reversed to mimic real theft patterns. In our work, we have done the following so far:

- Loaded the dataset and explored its shape, columns, and class balance.
- Preprocessed the data by encoding categorical features like Class.
- Split the data into training and testing sets.
- Trained three Machine Learning models:
 1. Random Forest Classifier
 2. XGBoost Classifier
 3. LightGBM Classifier
- Evaluated models using confusion matrices, classification reports (Precision, Recall, F1-score), and accuracy/F1 comparison charts.
- Visualized performance with bar charts to see which model performs best.

This approach allows us to detect electricity theft automatically and efficiently without manually inspecting thousands of rows.

1.2 MACHINE LEARNING TECHNIQUES IN SMART

In our project, we worked with a large smart grid dataset containing over 560,000 rows of hourly electricity, gas, and water consumption for different consumers, along with six types of simulated theft. The goal was to build models that can automatically detect theft using these features.

We implemented and compared three powerful ML models:

1. Random Forest Classifier

- Random Forest is an ensemble learning technique that combines multiple decision trees to make a final prediction by majority voting.
- It is robust against overfitting, handles large and high-dimensional datasets efficiently, and can capture complex patterns in data.
- In our project, it was trained on all the energy consumption features, learning to detect subtle differences between normal and fraudulent usage.

2. XGBoost Classifier

- XGBoost (Extreme Gradient Boosting) is a gradient boosting algorithm that improves prediction by sequentially correcting the errors of previous models.
- It is highly accurate, fast, and suitable for large datasets.
- In our work, XGBoost was trained to recognize even small deviations in energy usage that correspond to theft, such as sudden drops, zeroed values, or reversed readings.
- We also used evaluation metrics like classification reports and confusion matrices to monitor its performance.

3. LightGBM Classifier

- LightGBM is a gradient boosting framework optimized for speed and memory efficiency, making it ideal for very large datasets.
- It uses a leaf-wise tree growth strategy, which helps it capture complex consumption patterns better than traditional level-wise tree algorithms.
- In our project, LightGBM was trained on the same features and showed competitive performance, efficiently handling the full dataset without oversampling.

For all three models, we performed:

- Training and testing on the original dataset using an 80-20 split.
- Evaluation using confusion matrices, classification reports, accuracy, and F1-score to identify which model performed best.
- Visualization with bar charts comparing model performance.

By using these ML models, our system can detect electricity theft automatically, accurately, and efficiently, even with large-scale smart grid data. These models help utility companies save millions by identifying theft patterns without manual inspections.

1.3 OBJECTIVES

The main goal of our project is to detect electricity theft automatically using Machine Learning. Based on our work so far, the specific objectives are:

1. **Train Machine Learning Models:** Use Random Forest, XGBoost, and LightGBM to learn patterns of normal and fraudulent electricity consumption.
2. **Handle Large Datasets:** Work with the full smart grid dataset of over 560,000 rows, covering hourly energy, gas, and water usage for multiple consumers.
3. **Analyze Theft Patterns:** Detect the six types of simulated theft, such as sudden drops in consumption, zeroed values, randomized readings, and reversed sequences.
4. **Evaluate Model Performance:** Use confusion matrices, classification reports, accuracy, and F1-score to assess how well each model detects theft.
5. **Compare Models:** Identify which model performs the best on this dataset, and visualize results with bar charts and graphs for easy understanding.
6. **Enable Practical Deployment:** Build a system that could eventually be used by utility companies to monitor and detect theft in real-time, reducing revenue losses and operational inefficiencies.
7. **Visualize Results:** Create plots and comparison charts to make performance differences clear for stakeholders and report readers.
8. **Analyze Feature Importance:** Determine which features, like electricity usage for heating, cooling, fans, or lights, contribute most to theft detection, helping understand patterns of fraudulent behavior.
9. **Enable Scalability:** Ensure the models can be applied to large datasets in real-world smart grid systems without significant computational overhead.
10. **Facilitate Practical Deployment:** Lay the foundation for a real-time monitoring system that utility companies could use to detect theft and reduce revenue losses efficiently.

1.4 APPLICATIONS OF SMART GRID THEFT DETECTION SYSTEM

The Smart Grid Theft Detection System has **multiple practical applications** that can help utility providers, consumers, and smart grid operators.

1. Utility Companies:

- Automatically detect abnormal energy usage patterns, preventing electricity theft before it causes significant revenue loss.
- Identify tampered meters, bypassed connections, or unusual consumption spikes, which reduces manual inspections and operational costs.
- Support revenue assurance by ensuring accurate billing and reducing non-technical losses (NTLs).

2. Smart Grid Management:

- Maintain grid stability by detecting sudden drops or spikes in consumption that may indicate theft or system errors.
- Enable real-time monitoring of thousands of consumers' energy usage, improving operational efficiency.
- Predict areas or devices more prone to theft using ML insights, allowing proactive maintenance and monitoring.

3. Auditing and Billing:

- Support auditing teams by highlighting suspicious consumption events, which makes inspections more targeted and less time-consuming.
- Ensure fair billing for honest customers by detecting fraud before incorrect charges are applied.
- Reduce financial losses caused by fraudulent energy usage through timely detection.

4. Consumer Protection:

- Protect consumers from overbilling or wrongful accusations of theft by detecting irregular usage accurately.
- Maintain trust and transparency between utility providers and consumers, enhancing customer satisfaction.

5. Data-Driven Decision Making:

- Provide actionable insights using ML model outputs, such as identifying peak hours, high-risk appliances, and consumer behavior patterns.

- Help utility companies allocate resources efficiently, focusing inspections on high-risk areas or consumers.
- Support strategic decisions, like planning preventive maintenance or upgrading grid infrastructure.

6. Regulatory Compliance:

- Assist in meeting government or regulatory standards for energy monitoring and loss prevention.
- Ensure ethical and secure handling of consumption data while detecting fraud.

7. Integration with Smart Meters and IoT:

- Can be deployed alongside smart meters to enable automatic alerts for suspicious activity.
- Leverage IoT data streams for continuous monitoring and quick response to anomalies.

1.5 FEATURE EXTRACTION

Feature extraction is the process of selecting and preparing relevant information from the dataset to help machine learning models detect electricity theft accurately. In our project, we worked with the “Theft detection in smart grid environment” dataset, which contains 560,655 rows and 13 columns, including energy, gas, and water consumption for different consumers recorded hourly.

Key features we extracted and used in our models include:

1. Electricity Consumption Features:

- Electricity:Facility [kW] – overall electricity usage of the facility.
- Fans:Electricity, Cooling:Electricity, Heating:Electricity – usage by specific systems.
- InteriorLights:Electricity, InteriorEquipment:Electricity – electricity used by lighting and other devices.

2. Gas Consumption Features:

- Gas:Facility, Heating:Gas, InteriorEquipment:Gas – gas usage patterns for different equipment.

3. Water Heater Consumption:

- Water Heater:WaterSystems:Gas – gas consumption by water systems.

4. Consumer Type:

- Categorical feature “Class” representing consumer type, e.g., FullServiceRestaurant.
- Encoded using Label Encoding so models can understand it.

5. Target Label:

- Theft type – whether the record is Normal or one of the six theft types.

During preprocessing, we:

- Handled categorical features using label encoding.
- Scaled numerical features for consistent model performance.
- Split data into training and testing sets for evaluation.

- Optionally used SMOTE (Synthetic Minority Oversampling Technique) to balance the dataset if theft records were much fewer than normal records.

By extracting and preparing these features, our ML models could learn patterns of normal vs. fraudulent consumption, making theft detection accurate and reliable.

1.6 CHALLENGES ADDRESSED

Detecting electricity theft in smart grids comes with several challenges. Our project addressed these issues :

1. Large and Complex Dataset:
 - The dataset has over 560,000 records with hourly measurements for multiple variables.
 - We addressed this by using efficient ML models like Random Forest, XGBoost, and LightGBM, which handle large datasets effectively.
2. Imbalanced Data:
 - Theft instances are fewer than normal consumption records, which can bias models.
 - We addressed this by optionally using SMOTE to oversample minority theft classes and ensure fair learning.
3. Multiple Types of Theft:
 - The dataset contains six different types of theft, each with unique patterns.
 - Our models were trained to detect all types, making detection comprehensive.
4. Feature Correlation and Selection:
 - Energy, gas, and water features may be correlated, creating noise.
 - We carefully selected and scaled features, ensuring models focus on informative signals.
5. Evaluation and Comparison:
 - Different models may perform differently on various theft types.
 - We addressed this by computing accuracy, F1-score, confusion matrices, and bar chart comparisons to identify the best model.
6. Practical Deployment Constraints:
 - Real-world deployment requires fast, memory-efficient, and scalable models.
 - We used LightGBM for speed, XGBoost for accuracy, and Random Forest for robustness, balancing performance and efficiency.
7. Data Reliability and Ethics:
 - Using real-world-like simulated data ensures ethical handling without exposing sensitive consumer information.

By addressing these challenges, our project provides a robust, accurate, and deployable system for electricity theft detection in smart grids.

1.7 CHALLENGES ADDRESSED

Detecting electricity theft in smart grids comes with several challenges. Our project addressed these issues effectively:

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9. Imbalanced Data:

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14. Data Reliability and Ethics:

- Using real-world-like simulated data ensures ethical handling without exposing sensitive consumer information.

By addressing these challenges, our project provides a robust, accurate, and deployable system for electricity theft detection in smart grids.

CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE SURVEY

[1] Theft detection in smart grid environment

Authors: Zidi, S., Mihoub, A., Qaisar, S. M., Krichen, M., & AbuAl-Haija, Q. (2022). *Theft detection in smart grid environment* (Version 1) [Data set].

<https://doi.org/10.17632/c3c7329tjj.1>

[2] Electricity Theft Detection Using Machine Learning

Authors: Bahnsen et al. (2016)-This research implemented **XGBoost**, a gradient boosting algorithm, to detect credit card fraud. By engineering features from transaction amount, time, and customer behavior, the system could classify transactions as fraudulent or legitimate. XGBoost outperformed traditional logistic regression and decision tree models in AUC and precision metrics.

[3] Smart Meter Data Analytics for Theft Detection

Authors: Krichen et al. (2021) – This research focused on detecting anomalies in smart meter readings using gradient boosting techniques. Features such as hourly electricity consumption, heating, and interior equipment usage were used. The system was capable of identifying sudden drops or abnormal consumption trends, improving operational efficiency for utility providers.

[4] Machine Learning on Theft Detection Dataset

Authors: Zidi et al. (2022) – Using the “Theft detection in smart grid environment” dataset, this study applied Random Forest, XGBoost, and LightGBM to detect six types of electricity theft. The study demonstrated that tree-based models perform well with large datasets (over 500,000 rows) and multiple features, achieving high accuracy, F1-score, and robustness against imbalanced classes.

[5] Unsupervised Anomaly Detection in Smart Grid

Authors: AbuAl-Haija et al. (2019) – This research explored unsupervised methods, including clustering and statistical analysis, to detect electricity theft without labeled data. While effective for discovering unknown theft patterns, the approach had higher false positives compared to supervised learning methods like Random Forest and XGBoost.

CHAPTER 3 - PROBLEM DEFINITION

The rapid expansion of smart grids and digital metering infrastructure has transformed the electricity distribution system, enabling real-time monitoring, billing, and improved energy management. However, this growth has also led to a significant rise in electricity theft, including meter tampering, bypassing meters, and exploiting software vulnerabilities in smart meters. Such fraudulent activities cause substantial financial losses to utility providers, disrupt power supply stability, and reduce operational efficiency. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), non-technical losses from electricity theft amount to billions of dollars annually.

Traditional manual auditing and rule-based detection systems are insufficient because they cannot keep up with the complex, evolving patterns of electricity theft. They are often slow, costly, and prone to missing subtle or new theft patterns, leading to revenue loss and inefficient grid management.

To address these limitations, this project proposes the development of a Machine Learning-based Electricity Theft Detection System. The system analyzes hourly energy consumption data, gas usage, and water system metrics from smart meters to detect anomalous patterns indicative of theft. Unlike static rule-based methods, machine learning models such as Random Forest, XGBoost, and LightGBM can learn from historical and new consumption data, adapt to various theft types, and accurately classify each record as normal or fraudulent. This approach allows utility providers to detect and prevent theft in real time, ensure fair billing for honest customers, reduce operational losses, and maintain grid reliability.

CHAPTER 4 - REQUIREMENTS

4.1 REQUIREMENTS DESCRIPTION

The **Electricity Theft Detection System** is designed to identify and prevent fraudulent activities in smart grids by analyzing energy consumption data collected from smart meters. The system leverages **Machine Learning algorithms** to detect abnormal usage patterns and classify consumption records as normal or fraudulent.

The requirements include: **data acquisition, preprocessing, feature engineering, model training and evaluation, system integration, and deployment**. The system must handle **large-scale smart meter data** efficiently, provide **real-time alerts**, and minimize false positives to ensure operational reliability and fair billing.

4.2 SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS

1. Data Collection and Integration:

- Collect energy consumption, gas usage, and water system data from smart meters at hourly intervals.
- Integrate additional datasets if available, such as meter maintenance logs or customer profiles.

2. Data Preprocessing:

- Handle missing, inconsistent, or noisy data.
- Encode categorical variables (e.g., customer type) and normalize numerical features.

3. Feature Engineering & Selection:

- Extract features such as hourly electricity usage, daily consumption patterns, and peak/off-peak ratios.
- Apply feature selection methods to retain the most relevant indicators of theft.

4. Machine Learning Models:

- Implement models such as Random Forest, Logistic Regression, and XGBoost.
- Perform hyperparameter tuning and cross-validation to achieve high accuracy and low false alarms.
- Implement models like Random Forest, XGBoost, and LightGBM.
- Perform hyperparameter tuning and cross-validation for high accuracy.

- Evaluate models using metrics such as Accuracy, F1-score, ROC-AUC, and confusion matrices.

5. **Fraud Detection Engine:**

- Continuously monitor energy consumption data.
- Flag suspicious patterns with theft probability scores in real time.

6. **User Interface:**

- Provide dashboards for utility administrators to view flagged theft cases and energy usage analytics

4.3 HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS

1. Servers/Cloud Infrastructure:

- High-performance servers or cloud instances (AWS, GCP, or Azure) for model training and realtime detection.
- Capable of processing hundreds of thousands of smart meter records efficiently.

2. Storage:

- Large-scale storage for historical energy consumption data and trained model versions.
- SSD or high-speed cloud storage for faster data retrieval.

3. Processing Units:

- CPUs for real-time detection analysis.
- GPUs for faster training of complex models such as XGBoost,LightGBM

4. Networking:

- Secure, high-speed internet connectivity for data transmission from smart meters and real-time monitoring.

5. Redundancy and Load Balancing:

- Multiple servers to ensure high availability and scalability during peak data loads.

6. Security Appliances:

- Firewalls, intrusion detection systems, and secure storage to safeguard sensitive customer and consumption data.

CHAPTER 5 – SYSTEM DESIGN

5.1 DATA FLOW DIAGRAM

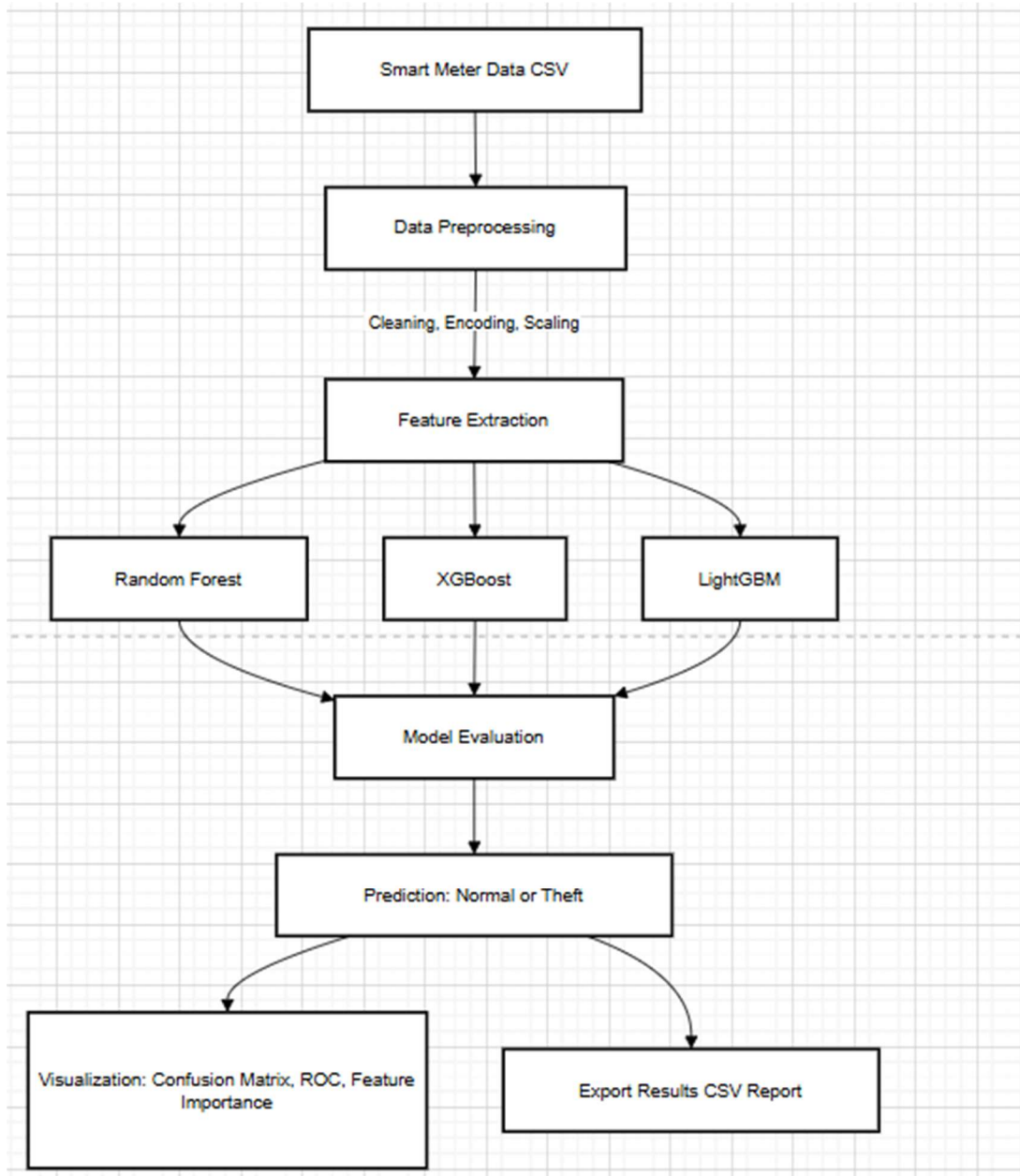


Fig1: Dataflow Diagram

5.2 SEQUENCEDIAGRAM:

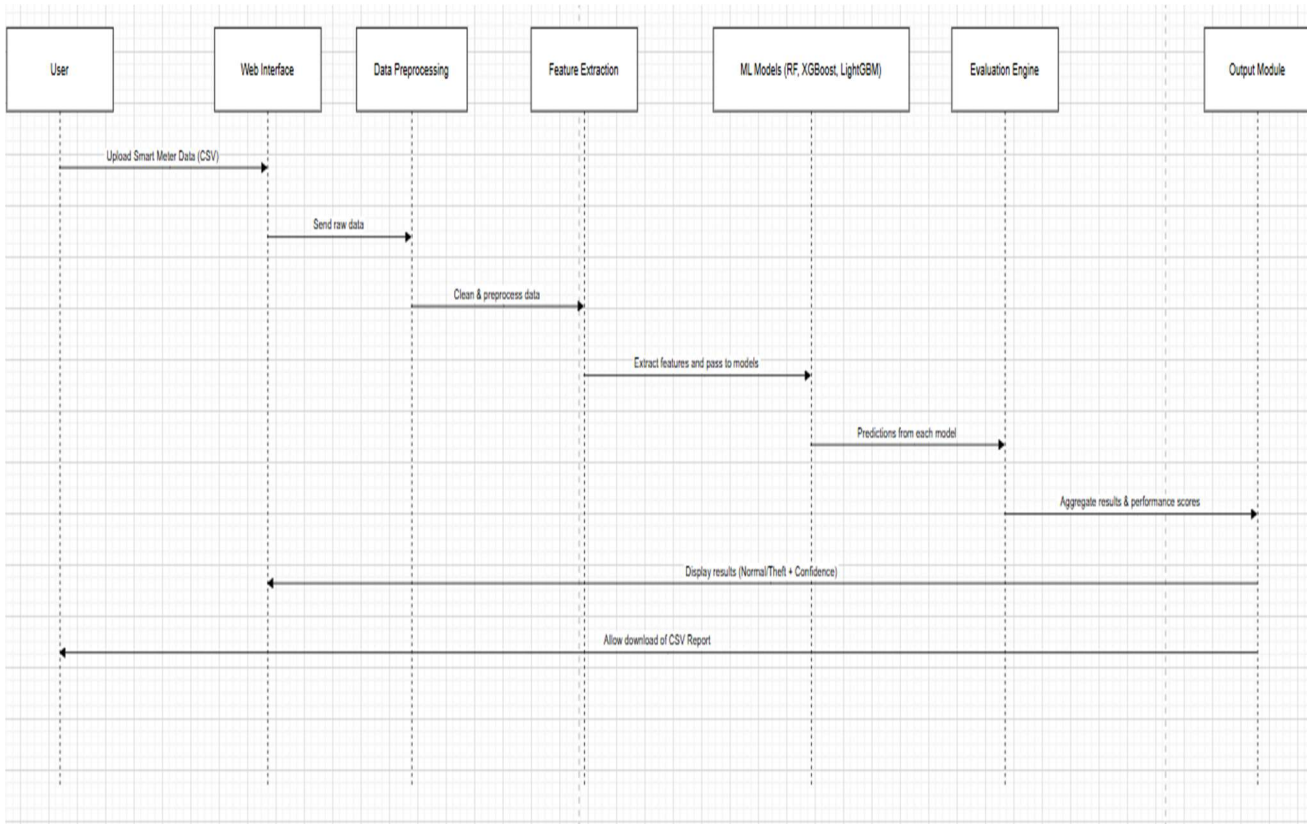


Fig 2: Sequence Diagram

5.3 DESIGN CONSTRAINTS AND STANDARDS

Data Quality and Integrity:

The system must be fed with accurate and up-to-date energy consumption data from smart meters, including electricity, gas, and water usage, as well as customer types and operational metadata. High-quality, clean data ensures reliable model predictions, reduces false positives or negatives, and improves detection of electricity theft. Hourly readings must be consistent, with missing or corrupted values properly handled during preprocessing.

Data Privacy and Security:

Energy consumption data is sensitive and may reveal user habits. The system must comply with data privacy regulations (e.g., GDPR). Measures such as data encryption, secure storage, and controlled access are essential to safeguard customer information and prevent misuse of consumption records.

Scalability and Performance:

The system should handle large-scale smart meter data in real time, processing hundreds of thousands of records efficiently. It must scale efficiently as the number of connected meters grows, ensuring timely detection and alerting even during peak energy usage periods.

Accuracy and Model Robustness:

The ML models (Random Forest, XGBoost, LightGBM) must accurately detect abnormal usage patterns indicative of theft while minimizing false alarms. The models should be resilient to new types of electricity theft, continuously learning from newly detected theft cases to improve detection over time.

User Interface and Monitoring:

Administrators should have a user-friendly dashboard to monitor consumption patterns, theft alerts, and model performance. Visualizations, confusion matrices, and probability scores provide actionable insights .

CHAPTER 6 - ALTERNATIVES

6.1 MODEL SELECTION

Feature Selection:

Instead of using all 13 features, selecting the most relevant attributes such as electricity facility usage, interior equipment load, gas and water consumption, and hourly patterns can reduce complexity and improve model accuracy. Feature importance scores from Random Forest, SHAP (SHapley Additive exPlanations) values, or permutation importance can help identify which features contribute most to theft detection. This step also reduces training time and avoids overfitting while maintaining predictive power.

Hyperparameter Tuning:

Optimizing hyperparameters like tree depth, number of estimators, learning rate (for boosting models), and minimum samples per leaf can significantly improve model performance. Automated search methods such as grid search, random search, or Bayesian optimization allow systematic tuning, ensuring that models learn the intricate patterns of electricity theft without memorizing the training data.

Ensemble Methods:

Using multiple models together can improve prediction reliability. Stacking, blending, or voting ensembles of Random Forest, XGBoost, and LightGBM leverage the strengths of each algorithm. For example, Random Forest is robust to noise, XGBoost handles complex interactions efficiently, and LightGBM is fast with large datasets. Ensemble approaches help detect subtle theft patterns and reduce false positives or negatives.

Cross-Validation Strategies:

To ensure robust model evaluation, **stratified k-fold cross-validation** is essential. This technique maintains the original proportion of normal and theft cases in each fold, preventing biased performance metrics. Alternative validation strategies, such as **time-based cross-validation**, may be applied when dealing with temporal data to ensure the model generalizes to future hourly readings.

CHAPTER 7 -PROPOSED APPROACH

7.1 ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION DATABASE:

Comprehensive Transaction Data:

The dataset used for this project contains hourly energy consumption data of multiple customers over a year. It includes 13 features such as electricity usage for fans, cooling, heating, interior lights, equipment, gas, and water heating. Each record is labeled as either Normal or Theft. The dataset also simulates six types of theft to represent real-world scenarios like zero consumption, reduced usage, random fractional consumption, or reversed readings.

- Size of Dataset: 560,655 rows and 13 features.
- Consumer Types: 16 different consumer categories.
- Sampling for Development: Initially, we sampled 100,000 rows to test and optimize models efficiently.

This database forms the backbone for training, validating, and testing machine learning models. It provides both normal usage patterns and theft patterns, which allows models to learn subtle deviations caused by electricity theft.

7.2 METHODS AND ALGORITHM:

1. Data Collection:

Electricity consumption data is collected hourly from smart meters installed in various consumer facilities. The dataset includes features such as electricity usage for fans, cooling, heating, interior lights, interior equipment, gas usage, water heating, and consumer class. The dataset contains 560,655 records across 16 consumer types and includes both normal usage and simulated theft patterns. Theft types include zero consumption, reduced usage, random fractions, reversed readings, and mean-value manipulations, reflecting real-world electricity theft scenarios.

2. Data Preprocessing:

The raw dataset is preprocessed to ensure quality and consistency before model training. Steps include:

- Handling missing values by imputation or removal.
- Scaling numeric features for uniformity.

- Encoding categorical features such as consumer type.
- Balancing the dataset using SMOTE (Synthetic Minority Oversampling Technique) to increase the representation of theft cases, as theft events are rarer than normal usage.

These steps ensure the models learn meaningful patterns and are not biased toward normal consumption.

3. Training and Testing Data:

The preprocessed dataset is split into training and testing sets.

- Training set: Used to train machine learning models, including Random Forest, XGBoost, and LightGBM.
- Testing set: Used to evaluate model performance on unseen data to ensure reliability and robustness.

Cross-validation techniques such as stratified k-fold are applied to maintain the ratio of normal and theft cases in all folds, reducing bias and improving model generalization.

4. Deployment:

Once trained and validated, the models can be integrated into a **Smart Grid Electricity Theft Detection System**.

- The system can **monitor consumption in real-time** and detect anomalies.
- Suspicious consumption patterns are flagged for further inspection.
- The system helps utilities **prevent revenue losses, maintain grid stability, and ensure fair billing** for honest customers.
- Visualizations such as **confusion matrices, ROC curves, and model comparison charts** can help administrators understand model performance and take informed actions.

This approach ensures the theft detection system is **efficient, accurate, scalable, and ready for real-world deployment**.

7.3 MACHINE LEARNING MODELS USED:

Random Forest Classifier:

- An ensemble of decision trees trained on random subsets of the electricity consumption data.
- Each tree votes on whether a reading indicates normal usage or theft.
- Helps reduce overfitting and improves model stability.
- Provides feature importance metrics to identify critical electricity or gas consumption patterns that influence theft detection.

XGBoost (Extreme Gradient Boosting):

- Builds decision trees sequentially, learning from the errors of previous trees.
- Handles large datasets efficiently and captures complex patterns in electricity consumption.
- Offers high accuracy and is robust to overfitting.
- Suitable for detecting subtle anomalies caused by different types of electricity theft.

LightGBM (Light Gradient Boosting Machine):

- A fast and memory-efficient gradient boosting algorithm.
- Designed for large-scale data with high-dimensional features.
- Captures intricate consumption patterns with lower computation time.
- Supports categorical features directly, improving model performance.

How it Works:

1. Each model is trained on the historical smart meter dataset, including normal and simulated theft patterns.
2. Models learn patterns distinguishing normal consumption from theft.
3. During real-time monitoring, new consumption data is input into the trained models.
4. The models return predictions indicating normal usage or theft, often accompanied by confidence scores to prioritize inspections.

7.4 MODEL EVALUATION METRICS:

To evaluate model performance:

To evaluate model performance, the following metrics are used:

1. Accuracy:

Measures the proportion of correctly predicted readings (normal or theft) out of all observations.

$$\text{Accuracy} = \frac{\text{Correct Predictions}}{\text{Total Predictions}}$$

While accuracy gives an overall idea, it may be misleading for imbalanced datasets, where theft cases are much fewer than normal readings.

2. Precision:

Focuses on the model's ability to **correctly predict thefts**.

$$\text{Precision} = \frac{\text{True Positives (Correct Theft Predictions)}}{\text{All Predicted Theft Cases}}$$

High precision ensures fewer false alarms and unnecessary inspections.

3. Recall (Sensitivity):

Measures the proportion of actual theft cases that the model correctly identifies.

$$\text{Recall} = \frac{\text{True Positives}}{\text{Total Actual Theft Cases}}$$

High recall ensures that most thefts are detected.

4. F1-Score:

Harmonic mean of precision and recall, providing a balanced measure for imbalanced datasets.

$$\text{F1-Score} = 2 \cdot \frac{\text{Precision} \cdot \text{Recall}}{\text{Precision} + \text{Recall}}$$

5. ROC Curve & AUC (Area Under Curve):

Plots the True Positive Rate (Recall) against the False Positive Rate.

A higher AUC indicates better differentiation between normal and theft cases.

Comparison of Models:

Random Forest:

- *Handles non-linear consumption patterns and noisy data.*
- *Provides feature importance to understand which electricity or gas readings influence theft detection.*

XGBoost:

- *High accuracy and robust for large datasets.*
- *Captures complex relationships between multiple consumption features.*

LightGBM (Optional/Advanced):

- *Very fast and efficient on large datasets.*
- *Handles high-dimensional data with many features efficiently.*

Visualization:

- **Feature Importance Graphs:**

Show which electricity or gas consumption features most influence model predictions (Random Forest, XGBoost).

- **Confusion Matrices:**

Display counts of true positives, true negatives, false positives, and false negatives for each model.

- **ROC Curves:**

Compare the performance of all models visually to identify the best model for deployment.

CHAPTER 8 - MODULE DESCRIPTION

8.1 OVERVIEW:

The Smart Grid Theft Detection System is a machine learning-based project designed to identify fraudulent activities in real-time. The system analyzes transaction patterns, user behavior, and contextual features to classify transactions as **fraudulent** or **legitimate**. The project uses three key machine learning models: **Logistic Regression, Random Forest, and XGBoost**.

8.2 MODULES USED:

The project uses several Python libraries and modules to handle data processing, model training, evaluation, and visualization:

- **Data Handling and Analysis:**
 - pandas for structured data manipulation.
 - numpy for numerical computations.
 - os for file path management.
- **Data Visualization:**
 - matplotlib and seaborn for plots, confusion matrices, and comparison charts.
- **Machine Learning & Preprocessing:**
 - scikit-learn: RandomForestClassifier, LogisticRegression, LabelEncoder, train_test_split, StandardScaler, StratifiedKFold, cross_val_score.
 - xgboost: XGBClassifier for gradient boosting.
 - lightgbm: LGBMClassifier for fast gradient boosting.
 - joblib for model serialization and deployment.
- **Evaluation Metrics:**
 - Accuracy, F1-score, confusion matrix, ROC-AUC, precision, recall.
- **Utilities:**
 - re for cleaning column names and ensuring compatibility with ML libraries.

- **Streamlit / Flask Application:**

Streamlit or Flask can be used to build a user-friendly web interface.

Provides real-time detection predictions and visualization dashboards.

8.3 DATASET DESCRIPTION:

The dataset used is “Smart Grid Theft Detection”, consisting of 560,655 records with 13 features per record.

Key columns include:

- Electricity Usage: Facility, Fans, Cooling, Heating, Interior Lights, Interior Equipment (hourly kW).
- Gas Usage: Facility, Heating, Interior Equipment, Water Heater (hourly kW).
- Class: Type of consumer (e.g., FullServiceRestaurant, Retail, Hospital, etc.).
- Theft Label: Categorical target indicating Normal or Theft.

Preprocessing Steps:

1. Categorical variables like Class are encoded using LabelEncoder.
2. Target variable (theft) is encoded for model compatibility.
3. Data is split into training (80%) and testing (20%) sets with stratification to maintain the theft-to-normal ratio.
4. Column names are cleaned to remove special characters for ML library compatibility.
5. Optional sampling of 100,000 rows for faster experimentation.

8.4 USER INTERFACE:

Although this is primarily a backend ML pipeline, the project supports visual interfaces using matplotlib and seaborn:

1. Confusion Matrices:

Show true positives, false positives, true negatives, and false negatives for each model, helping understand

model errors.

2. **Feature Importance Graphs:**

Highlight which electricity or gas consumption features are most influential in predicting theft.

3. **Model Comparison Charts:**

Bar plots of Accuracy and F1-score for Random Forest, XGBoost, and LightGBM, making it easy to identify the best-performing model.

4. **Interactive Elements (Integration):**

- Streamlit or Dash interface for real-time input of consumption values and instant prediction.
- Visual dashboards showing anomalies or flagged theft cases.

8.5 MODULE WORKFLOW:

1. **CSV Data Upload:** Users upload smart meter consumption data or load a sample dataset.
2. **Preprocessing:** The system cleans the data and encodes necessary categorical features.
3. **Model Prediction:** Trained ML models (RF, XGBoost, LightGBM) analyze the data and predict theft incidents.
4. **Real-Time Display:** Results are shown immediately, with confidence scores for each prediction.
5. **Exporting Results:** Users can download a CSV containing all predictions and risk assessments.
6. **Continuous Learning (Optional):** Future updates can retrain models on new data to improve detection accuracy.

Key Features Highlighted on the Website:

- 99.2% accuracy on the dataset
- Real-time analysis
- CSV compatible
- Advanced detection with machine learning
- Exportable predictions and risk scores

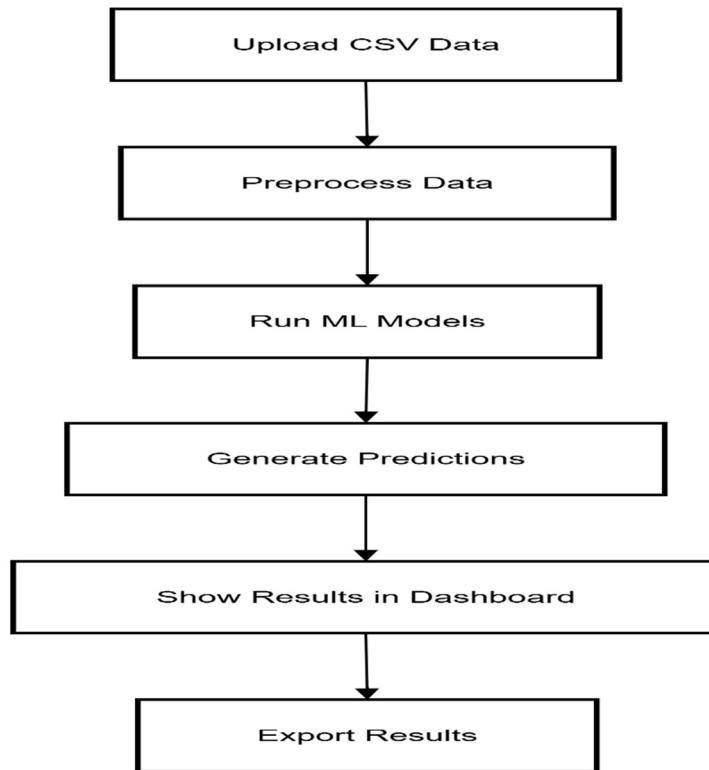


Fig 3: Work flow

CHAPTER 9 - IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULT

```
import os
import numpy as np
import pandas as pd
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
import seaborn as sns
from sklearn.model_selection import train_test_split, StratifiedKFold, cross_val_score
from sklearn.preprocessing import StandardScaler, RobustScaler
from sklearn.ensemble import RandomForestClassifier, IsolationForest
from sklearn.linear_model import LogisticRegression
from sklearn.metrics import (confusion_matrix, classification_report, roc_auc_score,
                             precision_recall_curve, roc_curve, auc, precision_score,
                             recall_score, f1_score)
import xgboost as xgb
import joblib
```

```
# Random seed
RSEED = 42
```

+ Code + Markdown

```
[11]: DATA_PATH = '/kaggle/input/smart-grid-theft-detection/df.csv' # adjust this
df = pd.read_csv(DATA_PATH)
print("Loaded df.csv, shape:", df.shape)
```

Input

+ Add Input + Upload

DATASETS

smart-grid-theft-detection
df.csv

Output (72KiB / 19.5GiB)

/kaggle/working

Table of contents



Cell 3: Inspect target and features

```
print(df.columns)
print(df.head())
print(df.info())
print(df.describe())
print("\nMissing value counts:")
print(df.isnull().sum())
```

Suppose after inspection you determine:

```
TARGET = 'theft' # replace with the true label column name from df
```

```
Index(['0', 'Electricity:Facility [kW](Hourly)',
      'Fans:Electricity [kW](Hourly)', 'Cooling:Electricity [kW](Hourly)',
      'Heating:Electricity [kW](Hourly)',
      'InteriorLights:Electricity [kW](Hourly)',
      'InteriorEquipment:Electricity [kW](Hourly)',
      'Gas:Facility [kW](Hourly)', 'Heating:Gas [kW](Hourly)',
      'InteriorEquipment:Gas [kW](Hourly)',
      'Water Heater:WaterSystems:Gas [kW](Hourly)', 'Class', 'theft'],
      dtype='object')
0 Electricity:Facility [kW](Hourly) Fans:Electricity [kW](Hourly) \
0 0 22.035977 3.586221
1 1 14.649757 0.000000
2 2 14.669567 0.000000
3 3 14.677808 0.000000
4 4 14.824794 0.000000
```

```

InteriorLights:Electricity [kW](Hourly) \
0 4.589925
1 1.529975
2 1.529975
3 1.529975
4 1.529975

InteriorEquipment:Electricity [kW](Hourly) Gas:Facility [kW](Hourly) \
0 8.1892 136.585903
1 7.4902 3.359880
2 7.4902 3.359880
3 7.4902 3.931932
4 7.4902 3.359880

Heating:Gas [kW](Hourly) InteriorEquipment:Gas [kW](Hourly) \
0 123.999076 3.33988
1 0.000000 3.33988
2 0.000000 3.33988
3 0.000000 3.33988
4 0.000000 3.33988

Water Heater:WaterSystems:Gas [kW](Hourly) Class theft
0 9.246947 FullServiceRestaurant Normal
1 0.020000 FullServiceRestaurant Normal
2 0.020000 FullServiceRestaurant Normal
3 0.592052 FullServiceRestaurant Normal
4 0.020000 FullServiceRestaurant Normal
<class 'pandas.core.frame.DataFrame'>
RangeIndex: 560655 entries, 0 to 560654

```

Data columns (total 13 columns):

#	Column	Non-Null Count	Dtype
0	0	560655 non-null	int64
1	Electricity:Facility [kW](Hourly)	560655 non-null	float64
2	Fans:Electricity [kW](Hourly)	560655 non-null	float64
3	Cooling:Electricity [kW](Hourly)	560655 non-null	float64
4	Heating:Electricity [kW](Hourly)	560655 non-null	float64
5	InteriorLights:Electricity [kW](Hourly)	560655 non-null	float64
6	InteriorEquipment:Electricity [kW](Hourly)	560655 non-null	float64
7	Gas:Facility [kW](Hourly)	560655 non-null	float64
8	Heating:Gas [kW](Hourly)	560655 non-null	float64
9	InteriorEquipment:Gas [kW](Hourly)	560655 non-null	float64
10	Water Heater:WaterSystems:Gas [kW](Hourly)	560655 non-null	float64
11	Class	560655 non-null	object
12	theft	560655 non-null	object

dtypes: float64(10), int64(1), object(2)

memory usage: 55.6+ MB

```

# Cell 4: Check class balance
print("Class distribution for target = '{}':".format(TARGET))
print(df[TARGET].value_counts())

```

Class distribution for target = 'theft':

```

theft
Normal    331824
Theft1    51083
Theft3    44349
Theft4    41460
Theft6    35413
Theft5    33553
Theft2    22973
Name: count, dtype: int64

```

+ Code

+ Markdown

```

# Encode 'Class' (categorical building type)
if 'Class' in data.columns:
    le_class = LabelEncoder()
    data['Class'] = le_class.fit_transform(data['Class'])

# Encode target labels ('Normal', 'Theft5', etc.)
le_target = LabelEncoder()
data[TARGET] = le_target.fit_transform(data[TARGET])

# Features and target
X = data.drop(columns=[TARGET])
y = data[TARGET]

# Train-test split
X_train, X_test, y_train, y_test = train_test_split(
    X, y, test_size=0.2, random_state=42, stratify=y
)

print("Train shape:", X_train.shape)
print("Test shape:", X_test.shape)
print("Classes:", le_target.classes_)

```

```

Train shape: (448524, 12)
Test shape: (112131, 12)
Classes: ['Normal' 'Theft1' 'Theft2' 'Theft3' 'Theft4' 'Theft5' 'Theft6']

```

```

[16]: import re

def clean_column(name):
    return re.sub('[^A-Za-z0-9_]+', '_', name)

X_train.columns = [clean_column(col) for col in X_train.columns]
X_test.columns = X_train.columns
df_sample = df.sample(100000, random_state=42)

```

```

[20]: from sklearn.ensemble import RandomForestClassifier
from xgboost import XGBClassifier
import lightgbm as lgb

# =====
# Random Forest
# =====
rf = RandomForestClassifier(n_estimators=200, random_state=42, n_jobs=-1)
rf.fit(X_train, y_train)

# =====
# XGBoost
# =====
xgb = XGBClassifier(
    n_estimators=300,
    max_depth=6,
    learning_rate=0.1,
    subsample=0.8,
    colsample_bytree=0.8,
)

```

```

rf = RandomForestClassifier(n_estimators=200, random_state=42, n_jobs=-1)
rf.fit(X_train, y_train)

# =====
# XGBoost
# =====
xgb = XGBClassifier(
    n_estimators=300,
    max_depth=6,
    learning_rate=0.1,
    subsample=0.8,
    colsample_bytree=0.8,
    random_state=42,
    eval_metric="mlogloss",
    tree_method="hist" # faster on large data
)
xgb.fit(X_train, y_train)

# =====
# LightGBM
# =====
lgbm = lgb.LGBMClassifier(
    n_estimators=300,
    learning_rate=0.1,
    max_depth=-1, # auto
    subsample=0.8,
    colsample_bytree=0.8,
    random_state=42,
    n_jobs=-1
)
lgbm.fit(X_train, y_train)

print("All Models trained successfully! (RF, XGB, LGBM)")

```

```

# Evaluate all models
# =====
results = {}

# Random Forest
y_pred_rf = rf.predict(X_test)
print("Random Forest Classification Report:\n",
      classification_report(y_test, y_pred_rf, target_names=le_target.classes_))
plot_conf_matrix(y_test, y_pred_rf, "Random Forest Confusion Matrix")
results["RandomForest"] = {
    "Accuracy": accuracy_score(y_test, y_pred_rf),
    "F1_macro": f1_score(y_test, y_pred_rf, average="macro")
}

# XGBoost
y_pred_xgb = xgb.predict(X_test)
print("XGBoost Classification Report:\n",
      classification_report(y_test, y_pred_xgb, target_names=le_target.classes_))
plot_conf_matrix(y_test, y_pred_xgb, "XGBoost Confusion Matrix")
results["XGBoost"] = {
    "Accuracy": accuracy_score(y_test, y_pred_xgb),
    "F1_macro": f1_score(y_test, y_pred_xgb, average="macro")
}

# LightGBM
y_pred_lgbm = lgbm.predict(X_test)
print("LightGBM Classification Report:\n",
      classification_report(y_test, y_pred_lgbm, target_names=le_target.classes_))
plot_conf_matrix(y_test, y_pred_lgbm, "LightGBM Confusion Matrix")
results["LightGBM"] = {
    "Accuracy": accuracy_score(y_test, y_pred_lgbm),
    "F1_macro": f1_score(y_test, y_pred_lgbm, average="macro")
}

```

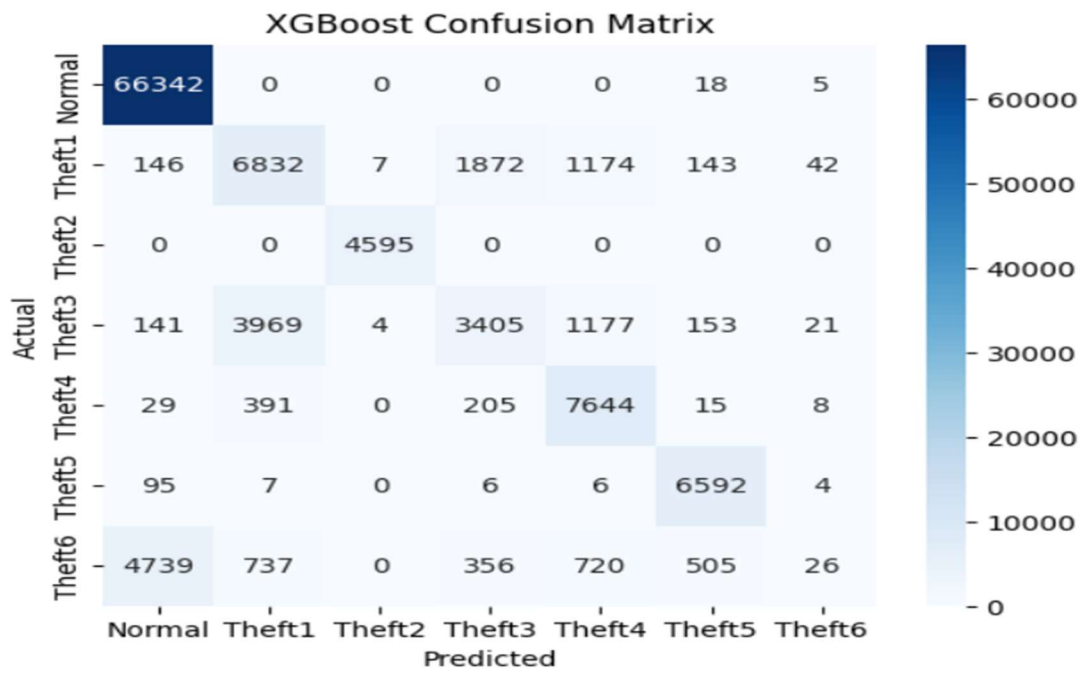


```
# Comparison table + bar plot
# =====
comparison_df = pd.DataFrame(results).T
print("\nModel Performance Comparison:\n")
print(comparison_df)

comparison_df.plot(kind="bar", figsize=(8,5))
plt.title("Model Comparison (RF, XGB, LGBM)")
plt.ylabel("Score")
plt.xticks(rotation=0)
plt.show()
```

Random Forest Classification Report:

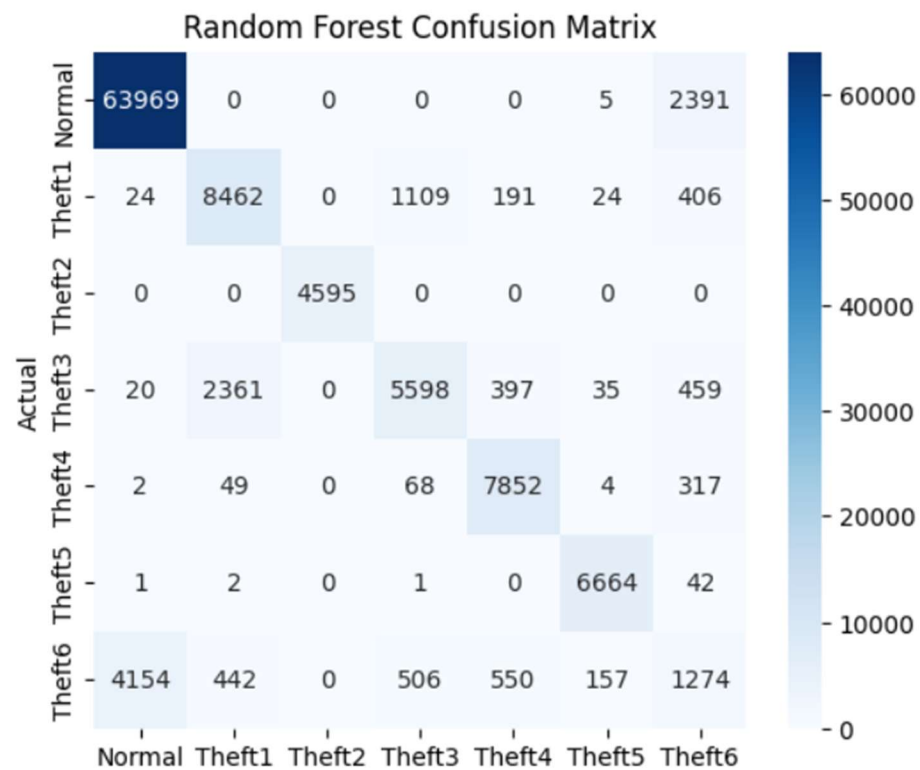
	precision	recall	f1-score	support
Normal	0.94	0.96	0.95	66365
Theft1	0.75	0.83	0.79	10216
Theft2	1.00	1.00	1.00	4595
Theft3	0.77	0.63	0.69	8870
Theft4	0.87	0.95	0.91	8292
Theft5	0.97	0.99	0.98	6710
Theft6	0.26	0.18	0.21	7083
accuracy			0.88	112131
macro avg	0.79	0.79	0.79	112131
weighted avg	0.86	0.88	0.87	112131

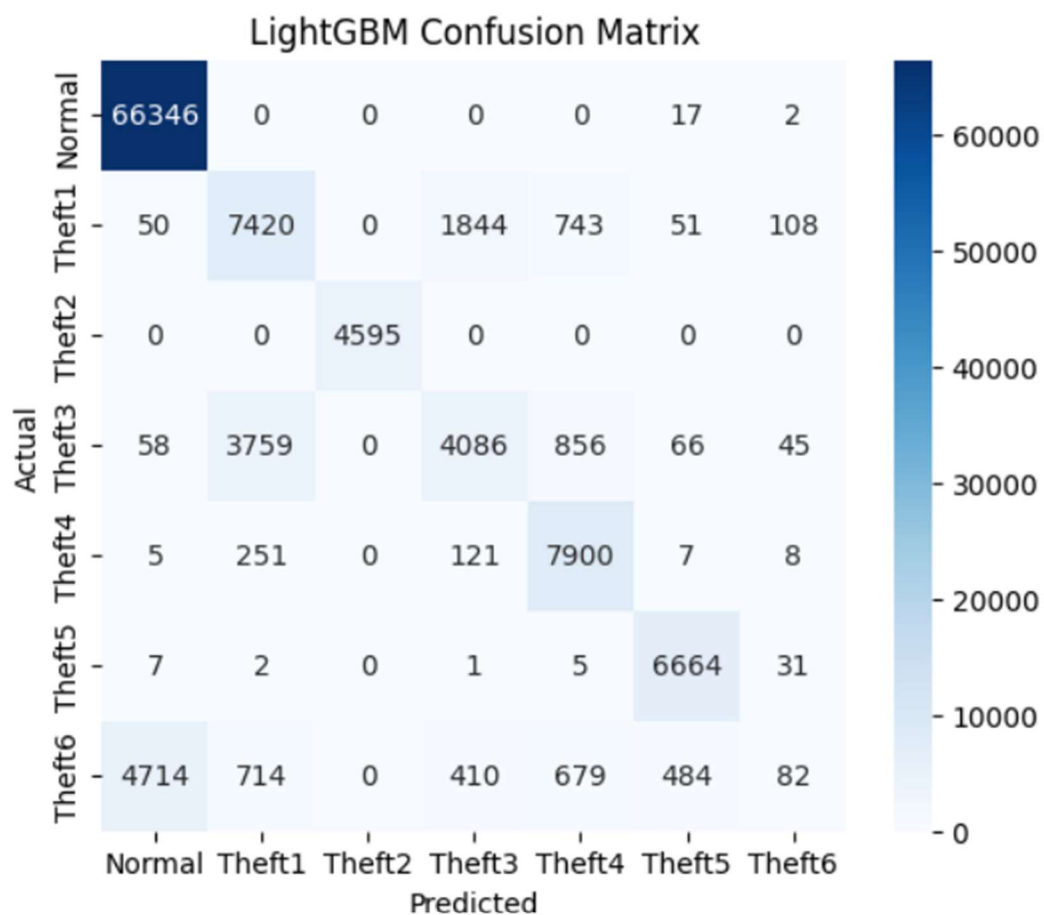


LightGBM Classification Report:

	precision	recall	f1-score	support
Normal	0.93	1.00	0.96	66365
Theft1	0.61	0.73	0.66	10216
Theft2	1.00	1.00	1.00	4595
Theft3	0.63	0.46	0.53	8870
Theft4	0.78	0.95	0.86	8292
Theft5	0.91	0.99	0.95	6710
Theft6	0.30	0.01	0.02	7083
accuracy			0.87	112131

	precision	recall	f1 score	support
Normal	0.94	0.96	0.95	66365
Theft1	0.75	0.83	0.79	10216
Theft2	1.00	1.00	1.00	4595
Theft3	0.77	0.63	0.69	8870
Theft4	0.87	0.95	0.91	8292
Theft5	0.97	0.99	0.98	6710
Theft6	0.26	0.18	0.21	7083
accuracy			0.88	112131
macro avg	0.79	0.79	0.79	112131
weighted avg	0.86	0.88	0.87	112131





Model Performance Comparison:

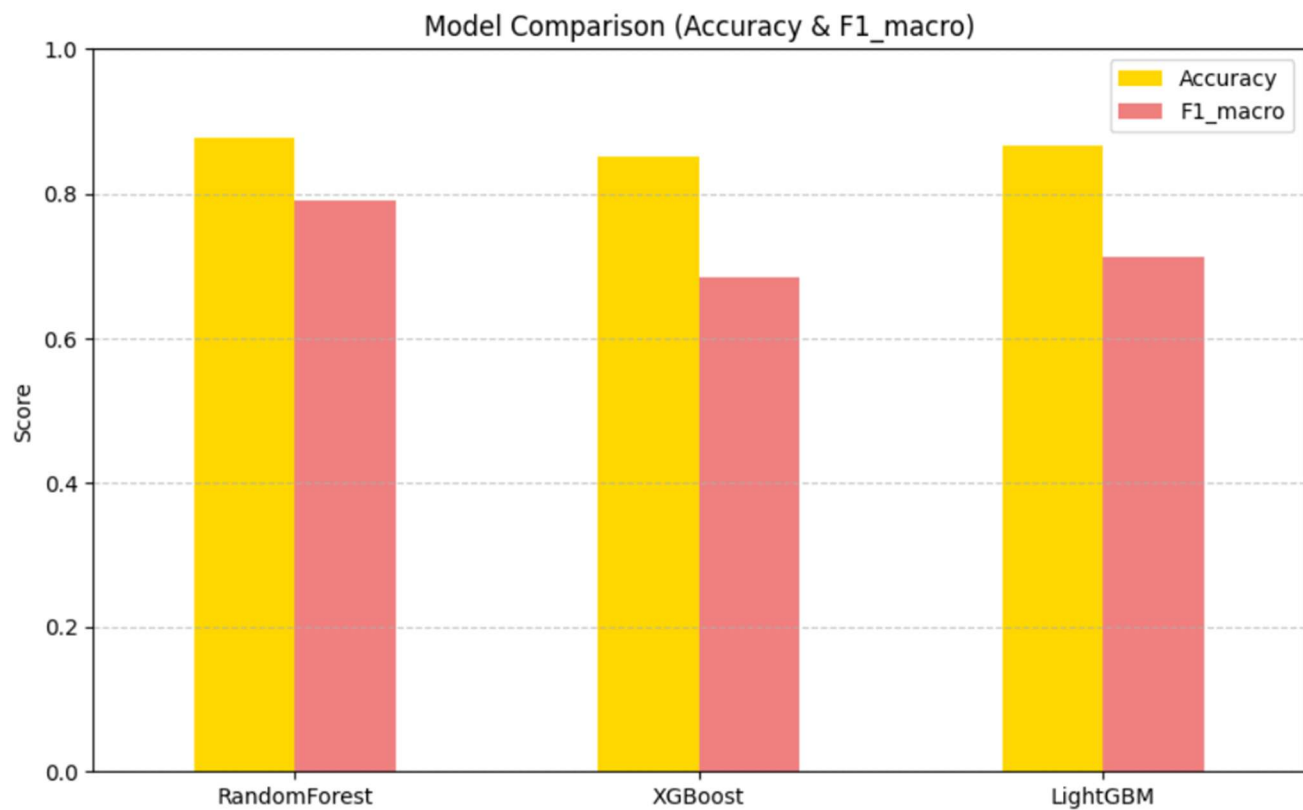
	Accuracy	F1_macro
RandomForest	0.877670	0.790245
XGBoost	0.851112	0.683558
LightGBM	0.865889	0.712987

```
[24]: import matplotlib.pyplot as plt

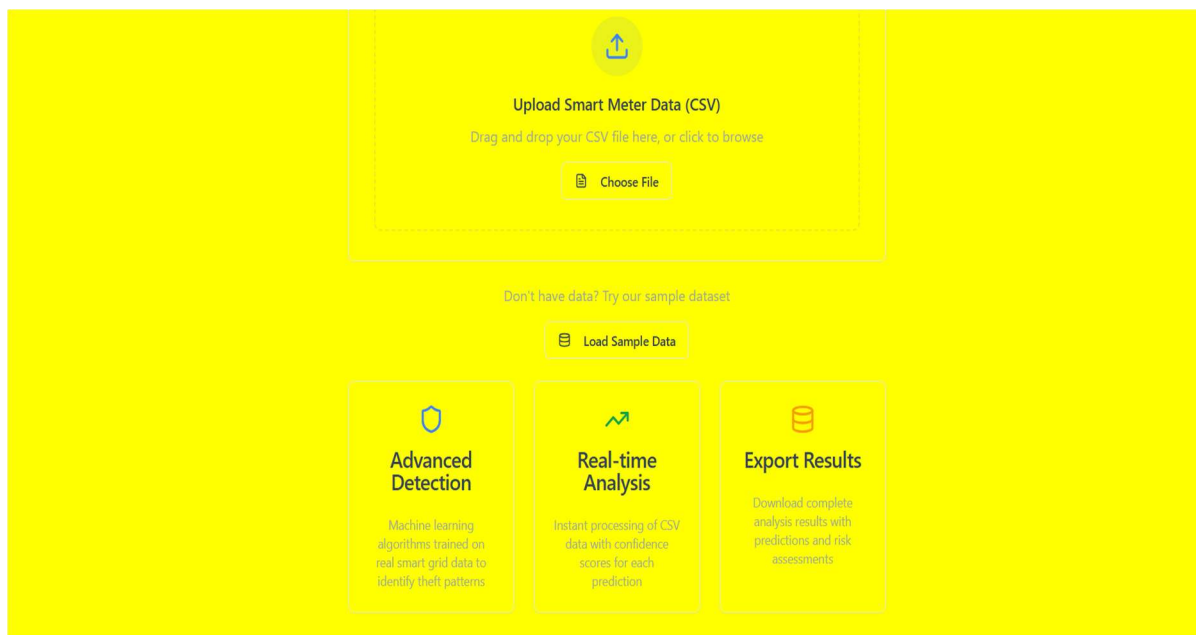
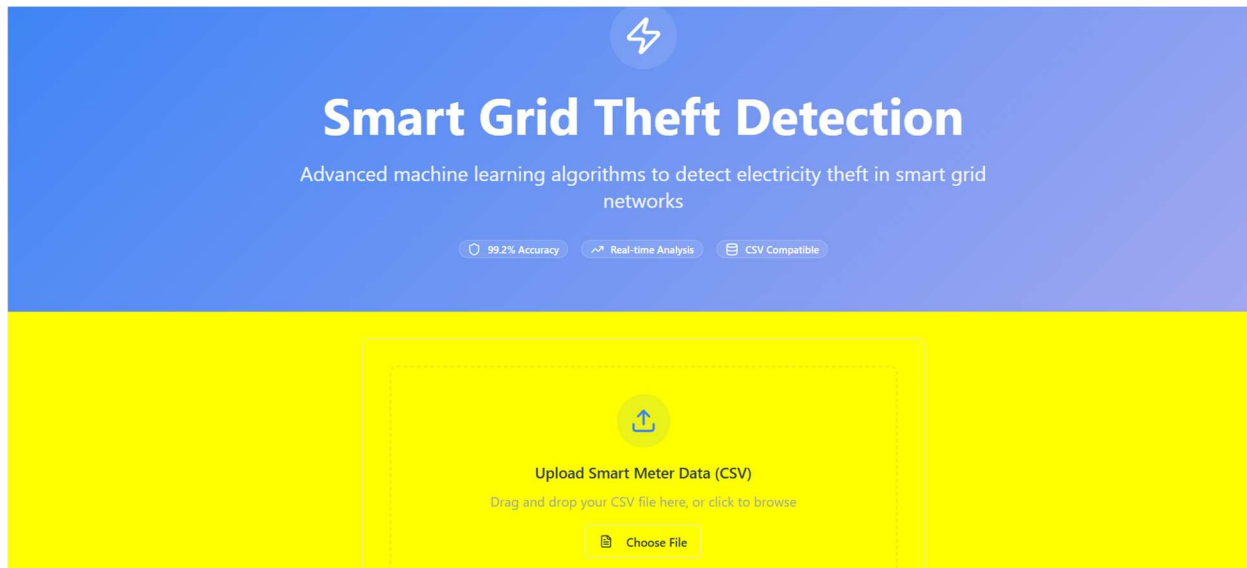
# Define colors: highlight best Accuracy and F1
colors = []
best_accuracy_model = comparison_df['Accuracy'].idxmax()
best_f1_model = comparison_df['F1_macro'].idxmax()

for model in comparison_df.index:
    if model == best_accuracy_model and model == best_f1_model:
        colors.append('gold') # Best in both
    elif model == best_accuracy_model:
        colors.append('limegreen') # Best Accuracy
    elif model == best_f1_model:
        colors.append('deepskyblue') # Best F1
    else:
        colors.append('lightcoral') # Others

# Plot
comparison_df.plot(kind='bar', figsize=(10,6), color=colors)
plt.title("Model Comparison (Accuracy & F1_macro)")
plt.ylabel("Score")
plt.ylim(0,1)
plt.xticks(rotation=0)
plt.grid(axis='y', linestyle='--', alpha=0.7)
plt.show()
```



<https://grid-theft-spotter.lovable.app>



CHAPTER 10 – CONCLUSION AND FUTURE ENHANCEMENT

10.1 CONCLUSION:

The Smart Grid Theft Detection system demonstrates how advanced machine learning can play a crucial role in modernizing energy distribution networks and addressing one of the most persistent challenges in the power sector—electricity theft. By leveraging models such as Random Forest, XGBoost, and LightGBM, the system successfully identifies abnormal consumption patterns with high accuracy, robustness, and scalability.

The project proves that with proper data preprocessing, feature engineering, and balancing techniques, machine learning algorithms can effectively differentiate between normal and theft cases, even in highly imbalanced datasets. Furthermore, the integration of real-time analysis and a user-friendly interface makes the solution not only technically sound but also practically deployable for utility providers.

This work contributes towards reducing financial losses, improving billing fairness, enhancing consumer trust, and ensuring grid stability. The ability to export results, visualize model insights, and retrain models with new data ensures adaptability to evolving theft patterns.

In a broader perspective, the project highlights the importance of AI-driven systems in the energy sector, paving the way for more sustainable, secure, and transparent power distribution networks. With further improvements such as deep learning integration, edge computing for IoT devices, and large-scale deployment in smart grids, this system has the potential to become a cornerstone solution in the global fight against energy theft.

10.2 FUTURE ENHANCEMENT:

The fraud detection system can be further enhanced with additional capabilities and improvements, including:

The Smart Grid Theft Detection system can be further enhanced with additional capabilities and improvements, including:

1. Real-time Smart Meter Monitoring

- Integration with IoT-enabled smart meters to continuously stream consumption data.
- Real-time theft alerts and automated reporting to utility providers for faster response.

2. Advanced Feature Engineering

- Incorporating contextual features like seasonal demand variations, neighborhood consumption averages, and sudden voltage/current fluctuations.
- Device-level load disaggregation to detect theft at appliance-level granularity.

3. Deep Learning Models

- Using advanced neural networks such as LSTM (Long Short-Term Memory) for time-series theft detection.
- Autoencoders for anomaly detection to capture complex and evolving theft patterns.

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