COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING

MAHARANA PRATAP UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE & TECHNOLOGY

UDAIPUR (RAJ.)

A

PROJECT REPORT

ON

Gesture Based Recommendation System

submitted in partial fulfillment for the award of the Degree of Bachelor of Technology in Department of Computer Science & Engineering

(Session 2024-2025)

Submitted To:

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DECLARATION

I, Prince Khatri, hereby declare that the Project titled **"Gesture Based Recommendation System"** carried out under the guidance of Ms. Anita Paneri has been developed by me and is not reproduced as it is from any other source. It has been submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for award of Bachelor of Technology in Artificial Intelligence & Data Science, MPUAT Udaipur, and has not been submitted anywhere else for the award of any other degree.

Date:

Place: Mavli

Prince Khatri

COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING

MAHARANA PRATAP UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE & TECHNOLOGY

UDAIPUR (RAJ.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project entitled "**Gesture Based Recommendation System**" has been completed and submitted by **Prince Khatri** in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Technology in Artificial Intelligence & Data Science from College of Technology and Engineering, a constituent of Maharana Pratap University of Agriculture and Technology, Udaipur.

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(Project Guide)

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Acknowledgement

I would like to sincerely and wholeheartedly thank everyone who helped me finish this project titled “Gesture Based Recommendation System.”

My first and greatest thanks are due to Ms. Anita Paneri of the Department of Computer Science & Engineering, CTAE, who provided essential direction, motivation, and continual oversight as I worked on this project. Thanks to her wise recommendations and steady backing, this project developed as it did.

My study was greatly strengthened by the knowledge and enthusiasm provided by the Artificial Intelligence & Data Science faculty.

I am very grateful to my family, especially my mother Rita Khatri for giving me unwavering encouragement and love that motivated me at all times.

I offer my thanks to my friends and peers for always encouraging, cooperating with, and believing in me during this project.

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Abstract:

My project ‘Gesture-Based Recommendation System’ provides a new approach for recommendation systems. It is an example of a Hybrid Type of Recommender system in which by using both content based and popularity based collaborative filtering we provide relevant recommendations to the user.

Streamlit API is used for building this web app for its ease of use and wide range of functionality like file uploaders, data frame representations and many more.

The best selling point of my app according to me is the applicability to use any data given its naming convention and certain attributes likely genres, image urls and homepage links, If the dataset have cleared these credentials then my app is as easy to use as it is to just drag and dropping the files as it is what you will have to do.

Another functionality of my app or we might say an exclusive feature of the app is “Swipe - Gesture Detection” which we use currently only on our Genre based recommendations. This SGD provides us with remote access to our app with less direct interaction with the device.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background:

Recommendations were always a part of our life whether we recognize them or not, We human beings mainly do things what our peers/friends or family suggests like, have you ever found yourself struggling to select a restaurant to take your friend (crush) and when it happens we often ask our friends or family to suggest one which they do and it is a general recommendation system.

Just like this in our model we made a recommendation system to do the same with the user-given data whereas it is a Movie dataset or Anime dataset like we do to suggest us with awesome animes according to our taste whether we want to watch popular titles, genre wise or maybe title wise like if i watched dragon ball which anime is most related to it content-wise that i will love to watch.

1.2 Motivation:

At the time this project was assigned, I was deeply focused on preparing for the **G.A.T.E. 2025** examination in **Data Science & Artificial Intelligence (D.A.)**. With the project submission deadline approaching quickly, I found myself struggling to think of a unique and realistic idea that would fit within the given constraints while also exciting me as a developer.

Then — almost randomly — the concept of a **Gesture Based Recommendation System** struck me. It wasn't something I had planned in advance; the idea came to me intuitively. I thought, "What if we could just swipe our hands in front of a screen to get personalized content suggestions?" From that moment, everything began falling into place.

I even explored adding advanced features like **gaze detection**, **emotion recognition**, **facial unlock**, and **complex hand gestures**, trying to push the boundaries of what a single interface could do. But due to real-world limitations like hardware support, project scope, and academic feasibility, many of those features had to be dropped.

Ironically, I came back to the **original idea** I had started with — and that's what became the final version of my project. It feels funny in hindsight: all those wild ideas, tests, and pivots ultimately led me back to the **first and purest concept** that clicked in my mind.

And that's what I built.

1.3 Objective

The primary goal of this project is to design and implement a **Gesture Based Recommendation System** that enhances user interaction through intuitive, contactless gestures while providing accurate and flexible recommendations.

The key objectives are as follows:

- To enable **gesture-driven navigation** through recommended content using a standard webcam and real-time hand tracking.

- To provide multiple recommendation modes, including:

    - **Popular recommendations** based on average ratings

    - **Genre-wise filtering** (gesture-controlled)

    - **Multi-genre filtering** (user-selected)

    - **Title-wise similarity-based recommendations**

- To implement **content-based filtering** using genre encodings and synopsis similarity.

- To develop preprocessing logic that transforms raw textual and categorical data into vectorized formats suitable for recommendation.

- To deliver an **interactive and accessible web application** using Streamlit.

- To support **data and model export** through file downloads for matrix scores, vocabulary maps, and parsed datasets.

1.4 Problem Statement

While traditional recommendation systems offer algorithmic precision, they often lack engaging and accessible user interfaces. Most platforms still rely on conventional inputs like mouse clicks and keyboard presses, limiting their potential for intuitive interaction — especially in smart devices, TV interfaces, or for differently abled users.

Furthermore, many recommendation systems lack **diversity in logic** — focusing only on collaborative filtering or surface-level popularity. Rich recommendation systems should provide users with flexibility to explore

content based on different needs: popularity, personal interest, specific genres, or similar titles.

Initially, this project emphasized gesture-based navigation, especially in genre-wise filtering. However, it became clear that relying solely on gesture interaction wouldn't be practical or impactful by itself. Thus, the real strength of the system lies in its **recommendation diversity**, enhanced by a gesture-based control layer.

This project addresses the following key challenges:

> *How can we build a modern, accessible, and dynamic recommendation system that not only supports contactless gesture control, but also provides rich and varied recommendation options that can match user taste flexibly and accurately?*

The solution combines:

- Gesture-based input (for engagement and accessibility)
- Content-based filtering (for personalized logic)
- Multi-mode recommendation paths (for flexibility and depth)

While not hybrid in the traditional collaborative+content sense, the system is structurally designed to be expanded into a hybrid engine in future iterations.

1.5 Scope of the Project

This project includes the end-to-end development of a gesture-interactive content recommendation system that works with anime or movie datasets containing genres, ratings, and synopses.

Included in Scope:

- Real-time gesture detection using webcam and MediaPipe
- User-friendly interface using Streamlit
- Content-based filtering through genre + synopsis vectors
- Recommendation modules:
  - Title-wise
  - Genre-wise (gesture-controlled)
  - Multi-genre scoring
  - Popular titles
- Data parsing and preprocessing
- Matrix and model export for reuse or evaluation

Excluded / Dropped from Scope:

- Gaze detection, emotion analysis, facial unlock – explored but excluded due to technical constraints.
- Live user tracking or recommendation feedback loop
- An interactive 3D view of the project using mathematical operations and ray casting and OpenGL and PyGame.

The system is designed to be scalable and extendable, with a flexible architecture that allows future integration of advanced features such as:

- Voice interaction
- Hybrid filtering models
- Deployment as a cross-platform app

1.6 Organization of the Report:

To ensure logical flow and reader clarity, the report is divided into the following four chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction:

Introduces the background and motivation of the project, explains the objective, problem statement, and clearly outlines the scope of work.

Chapter 2: Project Overview and System Architecture:

Provides an in-depth explanation of the system's working principles, including dataset structure, module breakdown, gesture recognition flow, recommendation logic, and the core technologies used.

Chapter 3: Results and Observations:

Presents experimental outputs, system performance, memory optimization results, and screenshots of the user interface and system in action. Also includes user behavior analysis and insights drawn from testing.

Chapter 4: Conclusion and Future Scope

Summarizes the project's achievements, highlights challenges and lessons learned, and outlines multiple directions for future enhancement and practical deployment.

2. Literature Review

The field of recommendation systems has evolved tremendously over the years, forming the backbone of modern-day platforms such as Netflix, YouTube, Amazon, and Spotify. In the context of personalization and ease of user interaction, numerous methods have been developed to understand user preferences and serve the most relevant content possible. This project takes a novel leap forward by integrating a gesture-based interface with a hybrid recommendation model. Below, we present the major foundational concepts and technologies our system is built upon.

2.1 Traditional Recommendation Systems

Recommendation systems fall broadly into four categories: **Content-Based Filtering, Collaborative Filtering, Popularity Based** and **Hybrid Methods.**

2.1.1 Content-Based Filtering

Content based filtering is the type of technique in which recommendations are made based on the content of the data, likely story, synopses, tag words, cast i.e. actor/actresses, characters, director, producer, etc.

As we all know that computers/ AI/ Machine is not that great when it comes to understanding the textual data for which, we form vector representation of given titles based on its content. To form vectors we can use various techniques such as:

Bag of Words:-

This is one of the easiest to understand and implement techniques in this technique we first extract all words from the given content/synopsis/description except the stop-words like “a”, “we”, “I”, “am”, “can” as they are mainly not that useful in these types of recommender systems.

Let’s say this is an example synopsis{in actuality its one of my favorite song}

Monster_lyrics = """ The secret side of me, I never let you see I keep it caged, but I can't control it So stay away from me, the beast is ugly I feel the rage and I just can't hold it It's scratching on the walls, in the closet, in the halls It comes awake, and I can't control it Hiding under the bed, in my body, in my head……

…….within, it's just beneath the skin I must confess that I feel like a monster I hate what I've become The nightmare's just begun I must confess that I feel like a monster I feel it deep within, it's just beneath the skinI must confess that I feel like a monsterI've gotta lose control, it's something radical I must confess that I feel like a monster I, I feel like a monster I, I feel like a monster I, I feel like a monster I, I feel like a monster! """

On using the bag of words on the lyrics this vocabulary is created

'awake, away, beast, bed, begun, beneath, body, break, caged, cause, closet, come, comes, confess, control, dark, deep, dream, end, escape, feel, gotta, halls, hate, head, hear, heart, hid, hiding, hold, inside, just, key, let, like, ll, lock, lose, make, maybe, monster, nightmare, radical, rage, razor, save, scratching, scream, secret, sharp, skin, somebody, soul, stay, stop, tear, teeth, ugly, ve, walls, wants, won'

After gathering the words we find the frequency of each word in the and sort in descending order and keep only the k-most frequent words, Here k is the maximum number of words to keep, a hyperparameter, whose value is to be decided by the user.

The vocabulary selection for the data with their specific count are
feel=> 23 | monster=> 18 | like=> 17 | just=> 10 | confess=> 9 | ve=> 7 | come=> 6 | beneath=> 5 | deep=> 5 | skin=> 5 | control=> 4 | begun=> 3 | body=> 3 | hate=> 3 | ll=> 3 | nightmare=> 3 | caged=> 2 | end=> 2 | hear=> 2 | hid=> 2 | let=> 2 | lose=> 2 | make=> 2 | save=> 2 | secret=> 2 | somebody=> 2 | wants=> 2 | won=> 2 | awake=> 1 | away=> 1 | beast=> 1 | bed=> 1 | break=> 1 | closet=> 1 | comes=> 1 | dark=> 1 | dream=> 1 | escape=> 1 | gotta=> 1 | halls=> 1 | head=> 1 | heart=> 1 | hiding=> 1 | hold=> 1 | inside=> 1 | key=> 1 | lock=> 1 | radical=> 1 | rage=> 1 | razor=> 1 | scratching=> 1 | scream=> 1 | sharp=> 1 | soul=> 1 | stay=> 1 | stop=> 1 | tear=> 1 | teeth=> 1 | ugly=> 1 | walls=> 1 | cause=> 0 | maybe=> 0 |

The selected k-words are then used to form our vocabulary as we also sort them alphabetically. The vector representation of an title is done by the frequency of the words it has from this “bag of words” / “vocabulary” like
And thus the vector representation of the song becomes

```
array([[ 1,  1,  1,  1,  3,  5,  1,  1,  2,  1,  1,  2,  1,  9,  4,  1,
         5,  1,  2,  1, 23,  1,  1,  3,  1,  1,  1,  1,  2,  1,  1, 10,
         1,  2, 17,  1,  1,  1,  2,  2, 18,  3,  1,  1,  1,  2,  1,  1,
         2,  1,  5,  2,  1,  1,  1,  1,  1,  1,  4,  1,  2,  2]],
      dtype=int64)
```

TF-IDF (Term Frequency-Inverse Document Frequency)

TF-IDF (Term Frequency-Inverse Document Frequency) is a statistical measure used in natural language processing and information retrieval to evaluate the importance of a word in a document relative to a collection of documents (corpus).

Unlike simple word frequency, TF-IDF balances common and rare words to highlight the most meaningful terms.

How it works:

TF-IDF combines two components: Term Frequency (TF) and Inverse Document Frequency (IDF).

Term Frequency (TF): Measures how often a word appears in a document. A higher frequency suggests greater importance. If a term appears frequently in a document, it is likely relevant to the document's content. Formula:

$$TF(t,\ d) = \frac{No.\ of\ times\ term\ t\ appears\ in\ document\ d}{Total\ number\ of\ terms\ in\ document\ d}$$

Limitations of TF Alone:

- TF does not account for the global importance of a term across the entire corpus.
- Common words like "the" or "and" may have high TF scores but are not meaningful in distinguishing documents.

Inverse Document Frequency (IDF): Reduces the weight of common words across multiple documents while increasing the weight of rare words. If a term appears in fewer documents, it is more likely to be meaningful and specific. Formula:

$$IDF(t,\ D) = \log\left(\frac{Total\ number\ of\ documents\ in\ corpus\ D}{Number\ of\ document\ containing\ term\ t}\right)$$

- The logarithm is used to dampen the effect of very large or very small values, ensuring the IDF score scales appropriately.
- It also helps balance the impact of terms that appear in extremely few or extremely many documents.

Limitations of IDF Alone:

- IDF does not consider how often a term appears within a specific document.
- A term might be rare across the corpus (high IDF) but irrelevant in a specific document (low TF).

Converting Text into vectors with TF-IDF : Example

To better grasp how TF-IDF works, let's walk through a detailed example. Imagine we have a corpus (a collection of documents) with three documents:

1. Document 1: "The cat sat on the mat."
2. Document 2: "The dog played in the park."
3. Document 3: "Cats and dogs are great pets."

Our goal is to calculate the TF-IDF score for specific terms in these documents. Let's focus on the word "cat" and see how TF-IDF evaluates its importance.

Step 1: Calculate Term Frequency (TF)

For Document 1:

- The word "cat" appears 1 time.
- The total number of terms in Document 1 is 6 ("the", "cat", "sat", "on", "the", "mat").
- So, TF(cat,Document 1) = 1/6

For Document 2:

- The word "cat" does not appear.
- So, TF(cat,Document 2)=0.

For Document 3:

- The word "cat" appears 1 time (as "cats").
- The total number of terms in Document 3 is 6 ("cats", "and", "dogs", "are", "great", "pets").
- So, TF(cat,Document 3)=1/6
- In Document 1 and Document 3, the word "cat" has the same TF score. This means it appears with the same relative frequency in both documents.

- In Document 2, the TF score is 0 because the word “cat” does not appear.

Step 2: Calculate Inverse Document Frequency (IDF)

- Total number of documents in the corpus (D): 3
- Number of documents containing the term “cat”: 2 (Document 1 and Document 3).

So,

$$IDF(cat, D) = log\frac{3}{2} \approx 0.176$$

The IDF score for “cat” is relatively low. This indicates that the word “cat” is not very rare in the corpus—it appears in 2 out of 3 documents. If a term appeared in only 1 document, its IDF score would be higher, indicating greater uniqueness.

Step 3: Calculate TF-IDF

The TF-IDF score for “cat” is 0.029 in Document 1 and Document 3, and 0 in Document 2 that reflects both the frequency of the term in the document (TF) and its rarity across the corpus (IDF).

TF-IDF(t, d, D) = TF(t, d) * IDF(t, D),

For Document 1:

TF-IDF(cat, Document 1, D) = 0.167 * 0.176 ≈ 0.029

For Document2:

TF-IDF(cat, Document 2, D) = 0 * 0.176 = 0

For Document3:

TF-IDF(cat, Document 3, D)=0.167 * 0.176 ≈ 0.029

A higher TF-IDF score means the term is more important in that specific document.

Word2Vec

Word2Vec Approach

Word2Vec, introduced by Google in 2013, is a fundamental technique used in modern NLP to generate word embeddings. It operates on the distributional hypothesis, which assumes that words appearing in similar contexts tend to have related meanings.

The model employs two strategies: Continuous Bag of Words (CBOW) and Skip-gram. Both are shallow neural networks comprising an input layer, a projection (hidden) layer, and an output layer. These networks analyze the context around a word—both previous and next words—to learn its semantic representation.

The learning process involves scanning through large corpora to find associations between words. Words that appear near each other frequently are considered semantically close, and this closeness is captured by embedding vectors placed nearby in the vector space.

To measure similarity between words, Word2Vec uses cosine similarity—a metric that calculates the cosine of the angle between two word vectors. A cosine value of 1 means the vectors are identical (i.e., highly similar), while a value of 0 implies no similarity (vectors at 90°).

CBOW Variant

In the CBOW model, a fixed-size window of context words is used to predict the target word. Words are one-hot encoded and passed through a dense hidden layer, resulting in a probability distribution over the vocabulary for the target word. CBOW works well for frequent words and is known for its training speed.

Fig 2.1 CBOW

In CBOW, we define a window size. The middle word is the current word and the surrounding words (past and future words) are the context. CBOW utilizes the context to predict the current words. Each word is encoded using One Hot Encoding in the defined vocabulary and sent to the CBOW neural network.

To illustrate how CBOW and related vectorizers like **Bag of Words (BoW)** work, imagine processing four short tweets.

'kind true sadly',

'swear jam set world ablaze',

'swear true car accident',

'car sadly car caught up fire'

Using a tool like Scikit-learn's CountVectorizer, we can convert these tweets into a matrix where each row represents a tweet and each column represents a word in the vocabulary. The matrix stores word counts and serves as input for further modeling.

	ablaze	accident	car	caught	fire	jam	kind	sadly	set	swear	true	up	world
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
3	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0

Fig 2.2 : CBOW

Skip-gram Variant

Skip-gram works in the reverse way of CBOW. Instead of using context to predict the center word, it uses the center word to predict nearby words. It uses a log-linear classifier and can effectively learn representations for **rare words**. The model outputs context words for a given input word based on a defined range.

Ultimately, both CBOW and Skip-gram aim to **learn the hidden layer weights**, which then become the **word embeddings** we use in NLP tasks.

The hidden layer is a standard fully-connected dense layer. The output layer generates probabilities for the target word from the vocabulary.

As we have discussed earlier about the bag of words (BOW) and it being also termed as vectorizer, we will take an example here to clarify it further.

Let's take a small part of disaster tweets, 4 tweets, to understand how BOW works:-

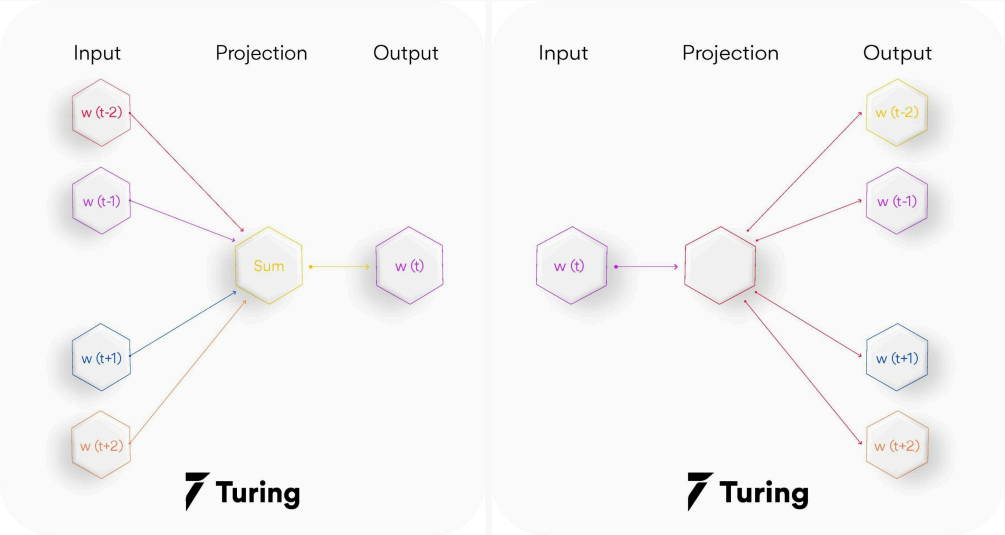


Fig 2.3: Difference between CBOW and Skip-gram neural architecture

Source: Turing.com 2023 (https://www.turing.com/kb/guide-on-word-embeddings-in-nlp)

4. My personalized genre based architecture:-

In these architecture we take only the genres/categories from the dataset and first find the set of unique datasets sort them alphabetically and based on the title's genre create a genre encoded vector which is like in here a multi hot encoded vector as a genre vector doesn't need any sense of direction or context the positional location of the genre is not required. Thus a one-hot or multi-hot encoding works best for it.

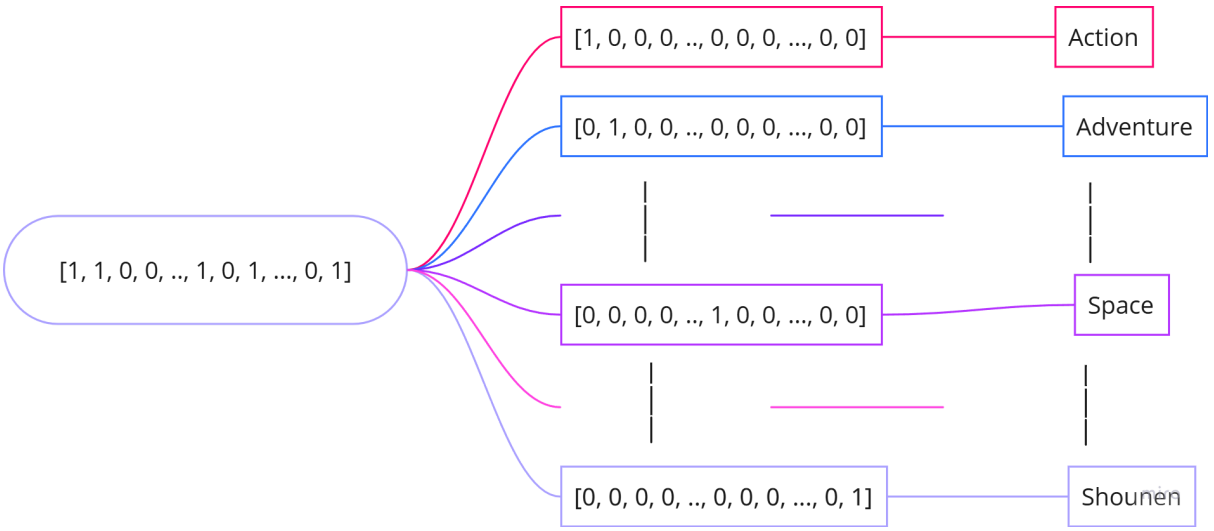
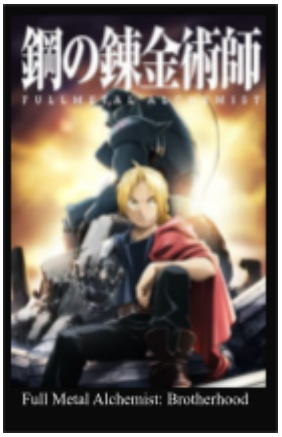


Fig 2.4 : Multi-Hot Encoded Genre based Vectorization

See it can be made more beneficial if we have more information on the data likely if we know that on a rating between 0 and 1 a title's is how much of a particular genre likely



Action : 0.8
Adventure : 1
Military : 1
Comedy : 0.25
Drama : 0.7
Fantasy : 0.5
Shounen : 0.8
Magic : 0.7

Fig 2.5: Suggestive genre of full metal alchemist

Then using the genre wise data we can get recommendations too

In content based filtering after getting the vector representation of the story/ synopsis/ genre/ etc. we calculate the cosine similarity matrix to find how likely are two titles to each other as for vectors cosine similarity is one of the best way to find the similarity in them.

[7]:

title	Haikyuu!! Second Season	Shigatsu wa Kimi no Uso	Made in Abyss	Fullmetal Alchemist: Brotherhood	Kizumonogatari III: Reiketsu-hen	Mob Psycho 100 II	Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi	Kimetsu no Yaiba	Owarimonogatari 2nd Season	Code Geass: Hangyaku no Lelouch R2	...	Yowamushi Pedal: Re:RIDE	Pokemon Movie 02: Maboroshi no Pokemon Lugia Bakutan
title													
Haikyuu!! Second Season	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.000000	0.0	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	...	0.0	0.000000
Shigatsu wa Kimi no Uso	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.000000	0.0	0.286920	0.000000	0.294555	...	0.0	0.269680
Made in Abyss	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.000000	0.0	0.000000	0.000000	0.251890	...	0.0	0.257035
Fullmetal Alchemist: Brotherhood	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.000000	0.0	0.000000	0.000000	0.257387	...	0.0	0.273154
Kizumonogatari III: Reiketsu-hen	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.000000	0.0	0.257307	0.420355	0.000000	...	0.0	0.000000
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Naruto x UT	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.000000	0.0	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	...	0.0	0.000000
Miira no Kaikata	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.358149	0.0	0.000000	0.322307	0.000000	...	0.0	0.000000
Shinryaku!? Ika Musume	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.000000	0.0	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	...	0.0	0.000000
Kingsglaive: Final Fantasy XV	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.336181	0.0	0.353791	0.000000	0.341761	...	0.0	0.000000
Chuunibyou demo Koi ga Shitai!: Kirameki no... Slapstick Noel	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.000000	0.0	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	...	0.0	0.000000

14005 rows × 14005 columns

Fig 2.6: Cosine similarity-matrix for anime.main dataset

2.1.2 Collaborative Filtering

Collaborative filtering is one of the most widely used and effective techniques in the world of recommendation systems. At its core, it relies on the assumption that users who agreed in the past will also agree in the future about item preferences. Rather than analyzing the content of items themselves, collaborative filtering focuses on the interactions between users and items — such as ratings, clicks, or purchases — to predict what a user might be interested in next. This approach is especially valuable when dealing with large datasets where item metadata is either unavailable or not detailed enough for content-based filtering.

There are two principal variations of collaborative filtering: user-based and item-based. In the user-based approach, the system identifies users who have demonstrated similar behaviors or preferences in the past. For example, if two users have rated many of the same movies highly, and one of them watches a new movie, the system might recommend that movie to the other. Item-based filtering, on the other hand, takes the opposite route. It looks for similarities between items based on how users have rated or interacted with them. If a user likes a particular movie, and another movie has received similar ratings

from many users who liked the first one, the system might suggest that second movie to the user. Both methods depend heavily on calculating similarity, commonly using cosine similarity, Pearson correlation, or even Jaccard index in binary cases.

At the heart of collaborative filtering lies the concept of a user-item matrix. This matrix represents the interactions between users and items, where each row corresponds to a user and each column to an item. The matrix is usually very sparse because any given user interacts with only a small subset of the total items. Predicting the unknown values — that is, guessing what rating a user would give to an item they haven't seen — is the key goal. While similarity-based memory approaches work well for small to medium datasets, they become computationally expensive and less effective as the number of users and items grows.

To tackle this, model-based collaborative filtering methods such as matrix factorization have become popular. These techniques attempt to uncover latent features that explain observed user-item interactions. By approximating the user-item matrix as a product of two lower-dimensional matrices — one representing users and the other representing items — systems can generalize well even with sparse data. One common method is Singular Value Decomposition (SVD), which captures the core structure of the data in reduced dimensions. These factorization methods not only reduce computational complexity but also enhance the ability to recommend items even in the face of data sparsity.

In recent years, deep learning has also found its way into collaborative filtering. Techniques like neural collaborative filtering (NCF), autoencoders, and deep factorization machines are able to model complex, nonlinear relationships between users and items. Unlike traditional matrix factorization, which assumes a linear interaction between latent factors, deep learning models can learn arbitrary functions to represent user preferences. These methods are especially powerful when integrated with additional information like timestamps, contextual data, or user demographics.

Despite its popularity, collaborative filtering has its share of limitations. One of the most well-known is the cold start problem, which occurs when the system lacks data on new users or new items. Because the model relies on past behavior, it struggles when there is no history to draw from. Another major challenge is sparsity: with millions of users and items, the interaction matrix is often mostly empty, which can hinder performance.

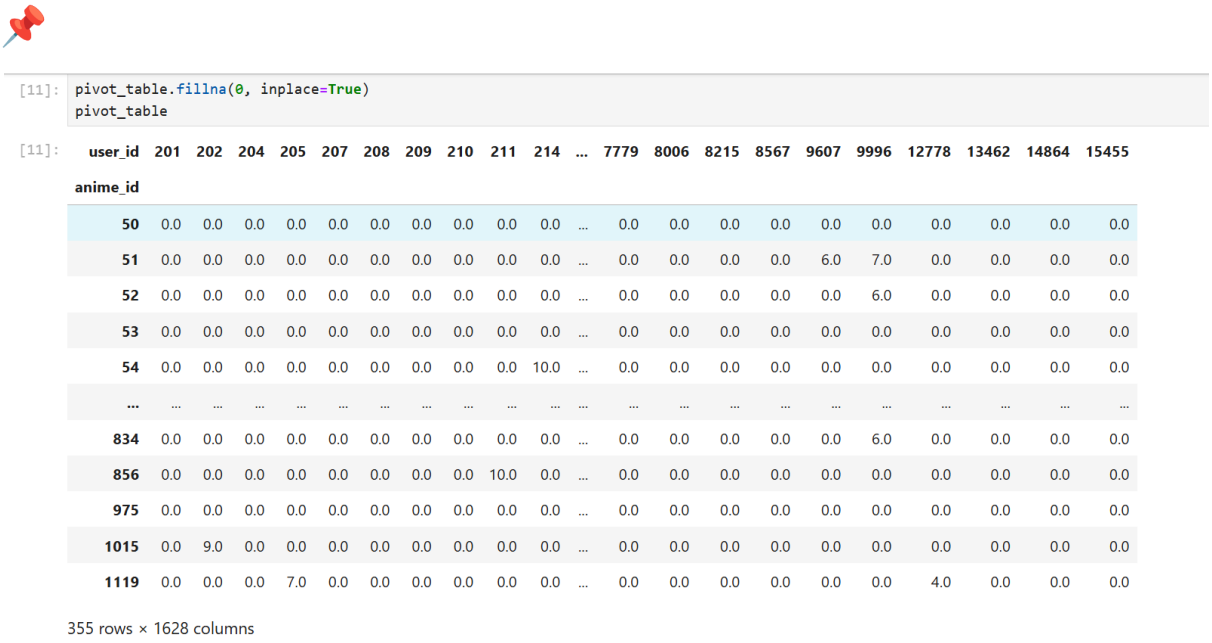
Scalability is also a concern, especially with user-based collaborative filtering, where finding the nearest neighbors can become computationally intensive in large datasets. Additionally, these systems can exhibit popularity bias, frequently recommending popular items and neglecting niche content.

Despite these challenges, collaborative filtering continues to power some of the most well-known recommendation systems. Platforms like Netflix, Amazon, and Spotify rely heavily on this technique to deliver personalized experiences. For instance, Netflix may recommend shows that people with similar viewing histories enjoyed, while Amazon might suggest items frequently bought together. On music platforms, collaborative filtering helps surface songs that align with the listening patterns of similar users.

In practice, many companies use hybrid systems that combine collaborative filtering with content-based or knowledge-based approaches to mitigate the weaknesses of each method. For example, content features can help in cold start situations where user interaction data is insufficient. Meanwhile, collaborative filtering remains invaluable for capturing subtle, abstract relationships that are hard to define with explicit content features alone.

In conclusion, collaborative filtering represents a foundational strategy in the field of personalized recommendations. Its intuitive appeal, combined with modern enhancements such as matrix factorization and deep learning, has allowed it to remain relevant and powerful even as datasets and user expectations grow more complex. By focusing on user behavior rather than item content, it opens the door to serendipitous discovery and genuine personalization — critical ingredients for engaging user experiences across digital platforms.

Although powerful, this approach was not used directly in our system due to the absence of active user feedback or interaction logs. However, its principles are discussed to highlight potential future expansions of our model.



```
[11]: pivot_table.fillna(0, inplace=True)
      pivot_table
```

[11]:

user_id	201	202	204	205	207	208	209	210	211	214	...	7779	8006	8215	8567	9607	9996	12778	13462	14864	15455
anime_id																					
50	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	...	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
51	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	...	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0	7.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
52	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	...	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
53	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	...	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
54	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	...	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
834	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	...	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
856	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	...	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
975	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	...	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1015	0.0	9.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	...	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1119	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	...	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

355 rows × 1628 columns

Fig 2.7: Collaborative Search anime-id vector representation in terms of user-id

---

2.1.3 Popularity-Based Techniques

The popularity-based recommendation system plays a vital role in our overall application. It serves not only as a recommendation strategy in itself but also as a fallback method in cases where personalized filtering is limited. Its importance increases especially in cold-start scenarios, where the system lacks prior user interactions, ratings, or preference history.

In this project, popularity-based recommendation is implemented both as a **standalone recommendation module** and as an additional **ranking layer** on top of content-based or genre-filtered outputs. The implementation for this module is contained within the main.py file (under the pages/ directory), which serves as the default homepage of the application, greeting the user with a curated list of top anime recommendations based on popularity metrics.

Unlike collaborative filtering or deep learning-based personalization, popularity-based recommenders are simple in logic yet highly effective in practice. They rely on statistical measures of item success such as average ratings, number of user votes, or a weighted combination of the two.

In our system, each item in the dataset has associated attributes including the **mean rating** it received and the **total number of users** who rated it. These attributes are used to construct a **popularity score** for each anime. The assumption here is that an anime with a high average rating and a high number of ratings is more likely to be universally appealing. This combination ensures that niche items with a very small but high rating do not appear above widely loved, well-rated shows.

The core idea behind the algorithm can be summarized in steps: first, the dataset is loaded; then, based on the two primary attributes (mean rating and total ratings), a composite score is computed; finally, the dataset is sorted in descending order and the top N items are selected for display.

This logic is built using **Pandas** for data manipulation and **Streamlit** for rendering the final list in a visually engaging format. The results include each anime's title, poster image, and an external link to its detailed information page.

The use of **Streamlit columns** plays a critical role here. The user interface is structured in rows and columns, usually three columns per row, to make the list aesthetically pleasing and easy to scroll through. Each entry displays:

- The poster of the anime
- The title
- A clickable link redirecting to the full synopsis or streaming site

This implementation creates a smooth, Netflix-like experience where the user is greeted with curated, globally popular content without needing to provide any input.

An important design decision was to **exclude textual processing** in this module. No synopsis analysis, no genre filtering, and no NLP techniques are used. This was intentional to ensure performance remains optimal and that the homepage always loads quickly, making it ideal for mobile or lower-end devices.

In terms of dataset handling, this module does not require the similarity matrix or the preprocessed synopsis vectors. It only requires access to a clean CSV file (output from parser.py) and the ratings file that contains:

Expected

- Title
- Image URL
- Link

Retrievable

- Mean Rating
- Number of Ratings

[32]:

	id	title	img_url	link	id_2	num_ratings	avg_score
0	28891	Haikyuu!! Second Season	https://cdn.myanimelist.net/images/anime/9/766...	https://myanimelist.net/anime/28891/Haikyuu_Se...	28891	104	8.788462
1	34599	Made in Abyss	https://cdn.myanimelist.net/images/anime/6/867...	https://myanimelist.net/anime/34599/Made_in_Abyss	34599	610	8.655738
2	5114	Fullmetal Alchemist: Brotherhood	https://cdn.myanimelist.net/images/anime/1223/...	https://myanimelist.net/anime/5114/Fullmetal_A...	5114	1274	9.243328
3	31758	Kizumonogatari III: Reiketsu-hen	https://cdn.myanimelist.net/images/anime/3/815...	https://myanimelist.net/anime/31758/Kizumonoga...	31758	56	8.500000
4	37510	Mob Psycho 100 II	https://cdn.myanimelist.net/images/anime/1918/...	https://myanimelist.net/anime/37510/Mob_Psycho...	37510	242	8.900826
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
650	1691	Kaze no Stigma	https://cdn.myanimelist.net/images/anime/12/23...	https://myanimelist.net/anime/1691/Kaze_no_Stigma	1691	103	7.029126
651	10321	Uta no☆Prince-sama♪ Maji Love 1000%	https://cdn.myanimelist.net/images/anime/6/302...	https://myanimelist.net/anime/10321/Uta_no%E2%...	10321	85	6.905882
652	6880	Deadman Wonderland	https://cdn.myanimelist.net/images/anime/9/752...	https://myanimelist.net/anime/6880/Deadman_Won...	6880	255	6.615686
653	13599	Robotics;Notes	https://cdn.myanimelist.net/images/anime/10/42...	https://myanimelist.net/anime/13599/Robotics_N...	13599	60	6.900000
654	8676	Amagami SS	https://cdn.myanimelist.net/images/anime/10/78...	https://myanimelist.net/anime/8676/Amagami_SS	8676	82	7.902439

655 rows × 7 columns

Fig 2.8: main_data.csv attribute schema

Using these fields, the module filters out any entries with missing ratings, sorts the rest based on the combined popularity metric, and then displays the top results.

This module is also important from a **UX and psychological perspective**. It acts as an initial hook to attract users by showing them something immediately. As a result, it reduces bounce rates, improves engagement, and serves as a trust-building mechanism—users are more likely to interact further once they see suggestions they recognize or find appealing.

We also ensured that the image resolution, layout size, and text formatting were consistent across devices. This was particularly necessary due to the variety of screen sizes users might access this through, especially if deployed online or on mobile platforms.

From a software engineering perspective, the popularity-based recommender also serves a **modular role**. It can be used as a utility function for other modules such as:

- Top-N in a specific genre

- Trending animes in multi-genre selections

- Backup recommendations in case similarity matrix fails to load

This modularity ensures code reuse and promotes extensibility, making the system scalable for future datasets or other domains like movies, books, or music.

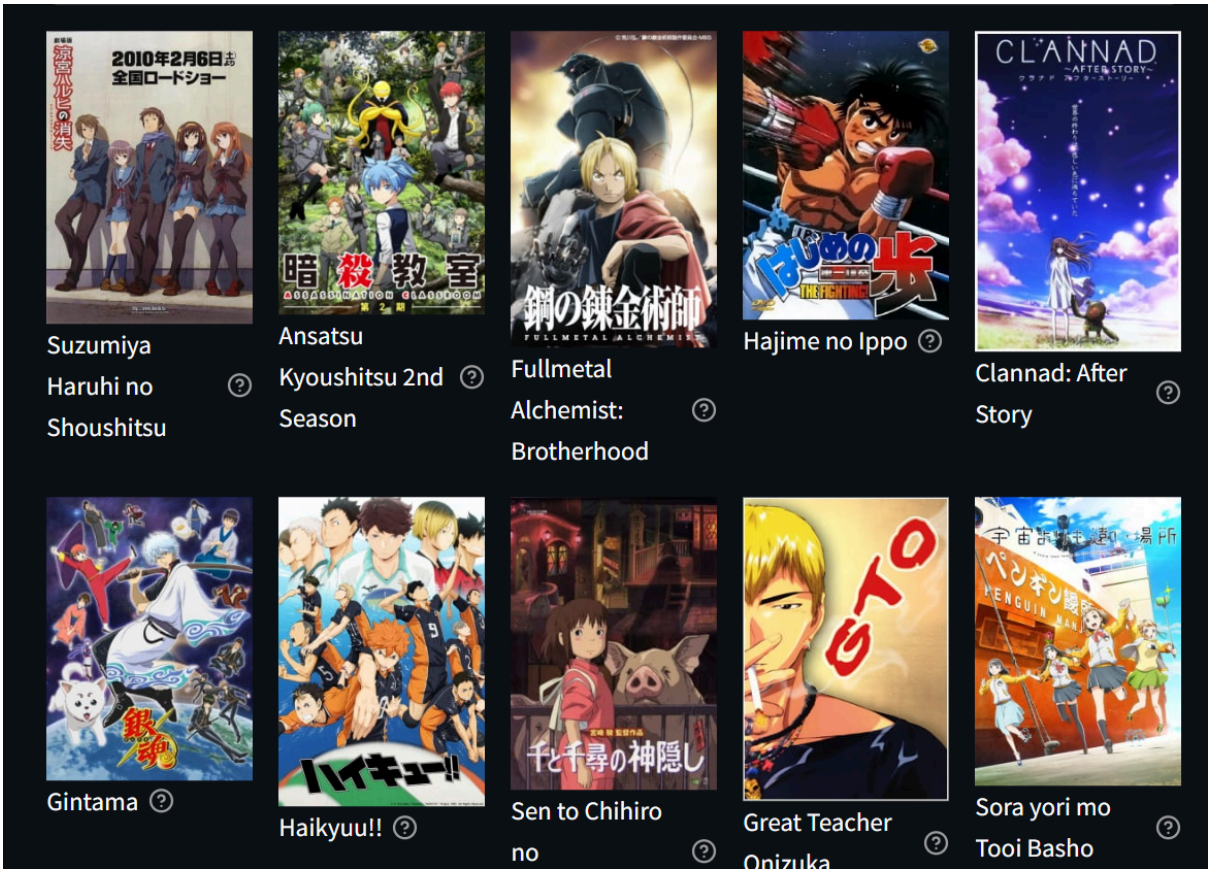


Fig 2.9 : Popularity Based Anime Recommendation

2.1.4 Hybrid Recommendation System

Recommendation systems are rarely one-size-fits-all. As user behavior becomes more dynamic and datasets more diverse, the systems that try to understand what people like must also evolve to be flexible, layered, and context-aware. This is where hybrid

recommendation models come in — systems that draw from more than one strategy, blending logic, mathematics, and even psychology to predict what users might enjoy next.

In this project, while the core algorithmic structure is heavily grounded in **content-based filtering**, we elevate it by combining multiple techniques into a cohesive hybrid model. Our system intelligently blends **genre-based filtering**, **bag-of-words vector similarity**, and **popularity scoring** to generate relevant and engaging suggestions.

At first glance, the modules may appear to work independently — but underneath, they share foundational data, vector spaces, and ranking principles that make the system more than just the sum of its parts.

Title-Based Recommendation: Content + Genre Fusion

The title-wise.py module delivers **content-based recommendations** using a hybrid scoring mechanism that balances **synopsis similarity** with **genre overlap**.

Here's how it works:

1. When a user selects a title (e.g., *Attack on Titan*), we retrieve its **vectorized synopsis** from a bag-of-words model created using CountVectorizer.

2. At the same time, we fetch the anime's **genre vector** — a multi-hot encoded representation indicating which genres it belongs to.

3. We then compare both:

    - **Textual similarity**: Calculated via **cosine similarity** between synopsis vectors.

    - **Genre similarity**: Also via cosine similarity, but this time using genre vectors.

These two scores are then **blended using a 70-30 weighted average**, where:

- 70% weight is given to the **content-based textual similarity**, and

- 30% weight is given to the **genre vector similarity**.

This blend ensures that recommendations are not just similar in plot or keywords, but also in feel, tone, and genre identity. For instance, if someone watched *Death Note*, the system won't just recommend other psychological thrillers with similar synopses — it will favor those that also share mystery, drama, or supernatural elements in genre.

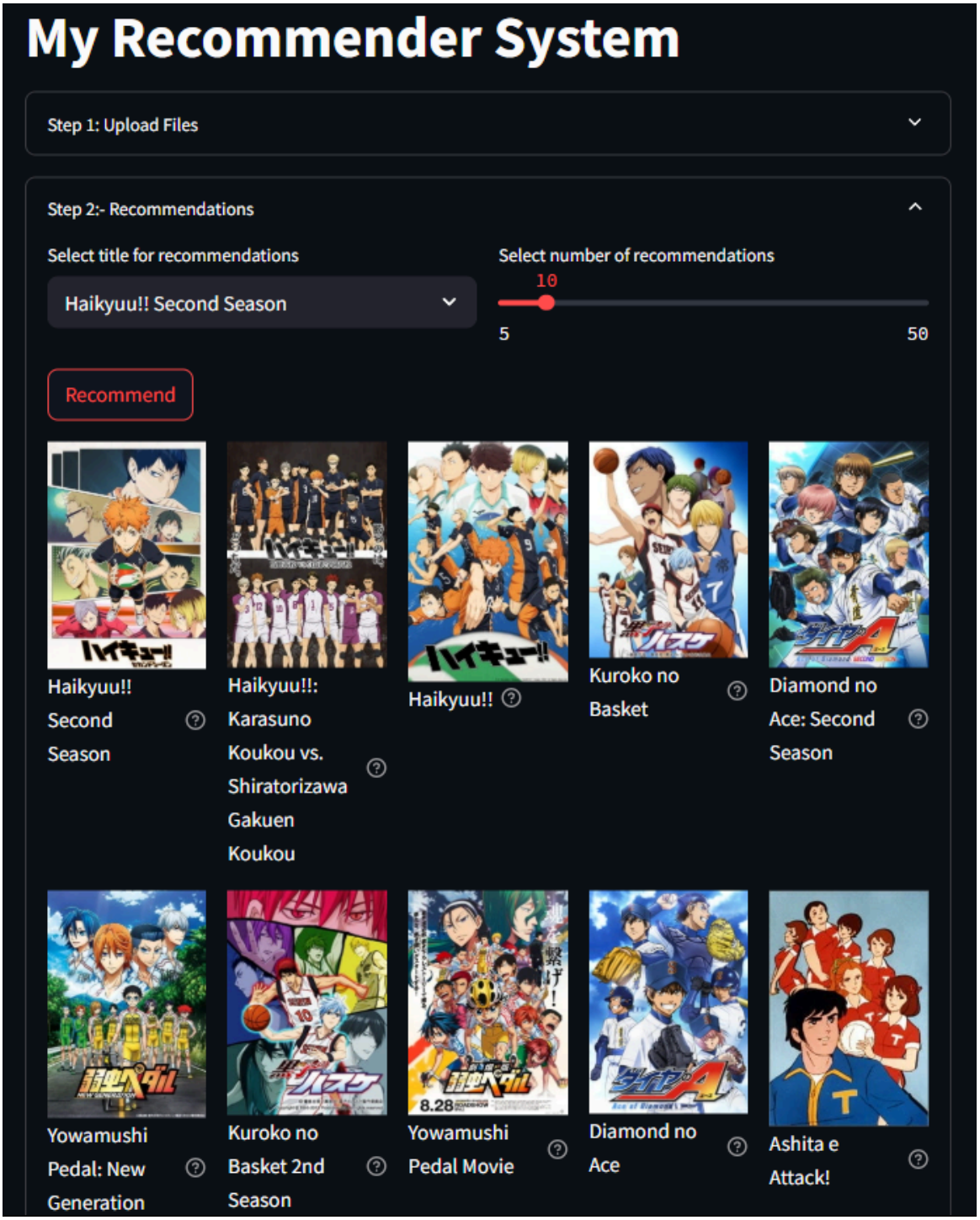


Fig 2.10: Title-Based Recommendation System UI look

Genre-Wise Recommendations: Genre Encoding + Popularity

In the genre-wise.py module, the system uses real-time **gesture detection** to switch genres, and for each selected genre, it retrieves relevant anime using a hybrid approach combining **genre encodings** and **popularity ranking**.

Here's how the process works:

- The genre chosen (e.g., *Action*) is used to search through the **multi-hot encoded genre matrix**.

- All anime matching the genre are shortlisted. However, instead of returning them in a random or alphabetical order, the system applies **popularity scoring** using:

    - Average rating

    - Number of ratings

- These anime are then **sorted in descending order of popularity**, ensuring that the user is shown the **best and most watched titles** within that genre.

The use of gesture detection adds a unique human-computer interaction twist — rather than clicking dropdowns or typing text, users simply **swipe left or right to switch genres**, making the experience engaging and immersive.

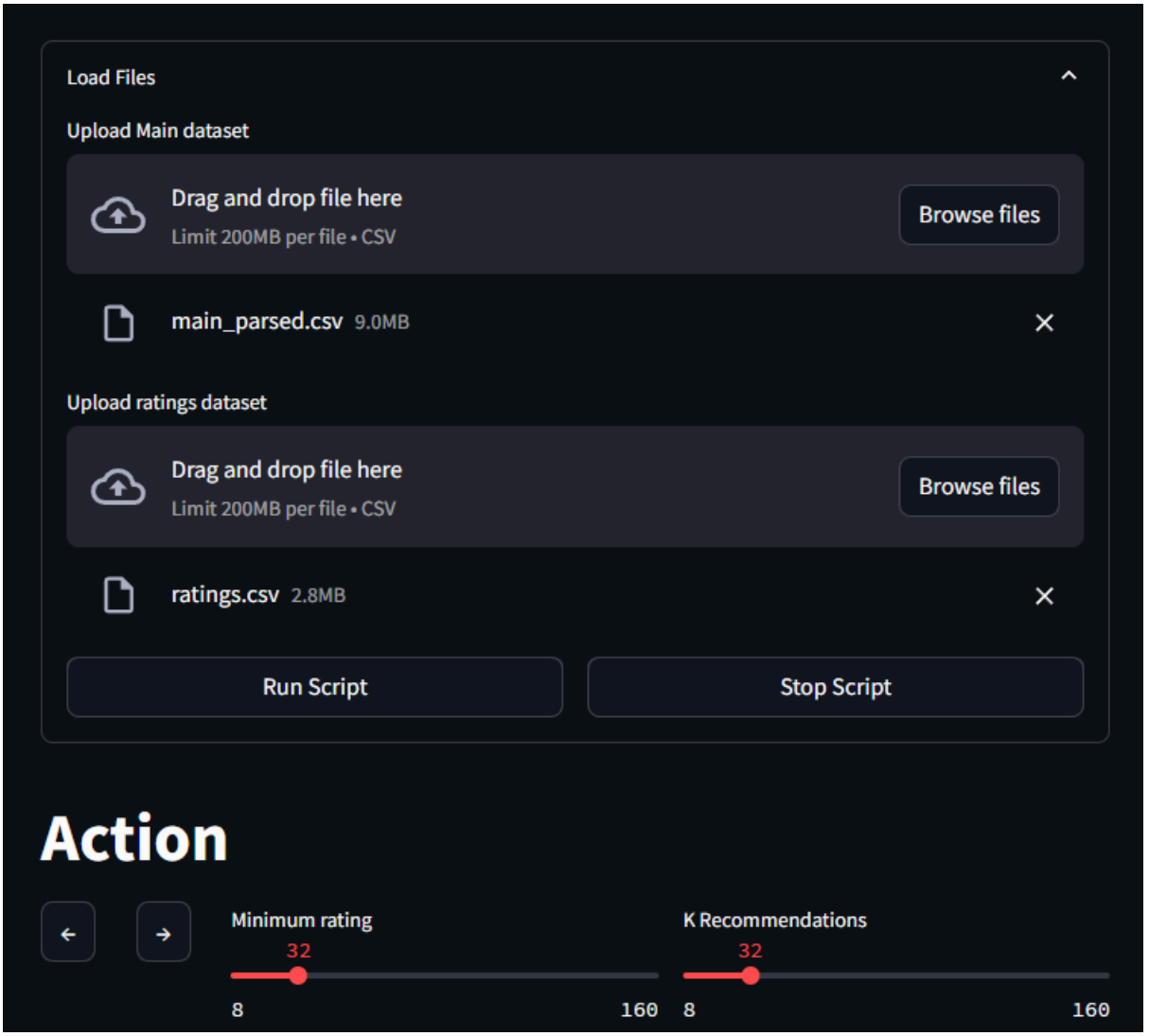


Fig 2.11 Swipe Gesture Activation within genre.py(a)

On clicking Run Script runs the gesture_detection.py file and Stop Script stops it. After pressing the button the script will run and a pop up window of open cv will appear and the gesture of swipe if detected will perform its action and also print it in the terminal.

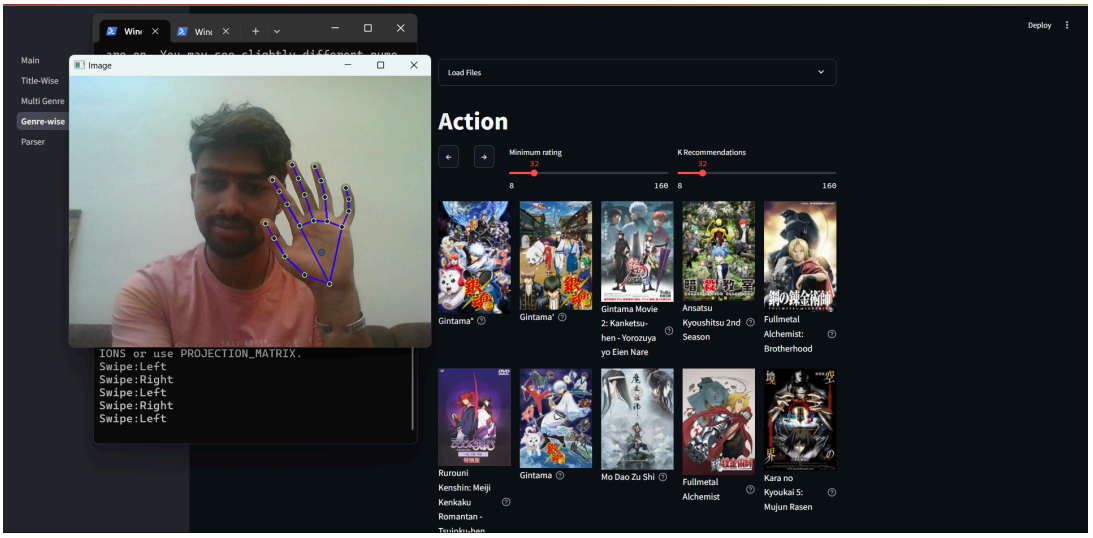


Fig 2.12 Swipe Gesture Activation within genre.py (b)

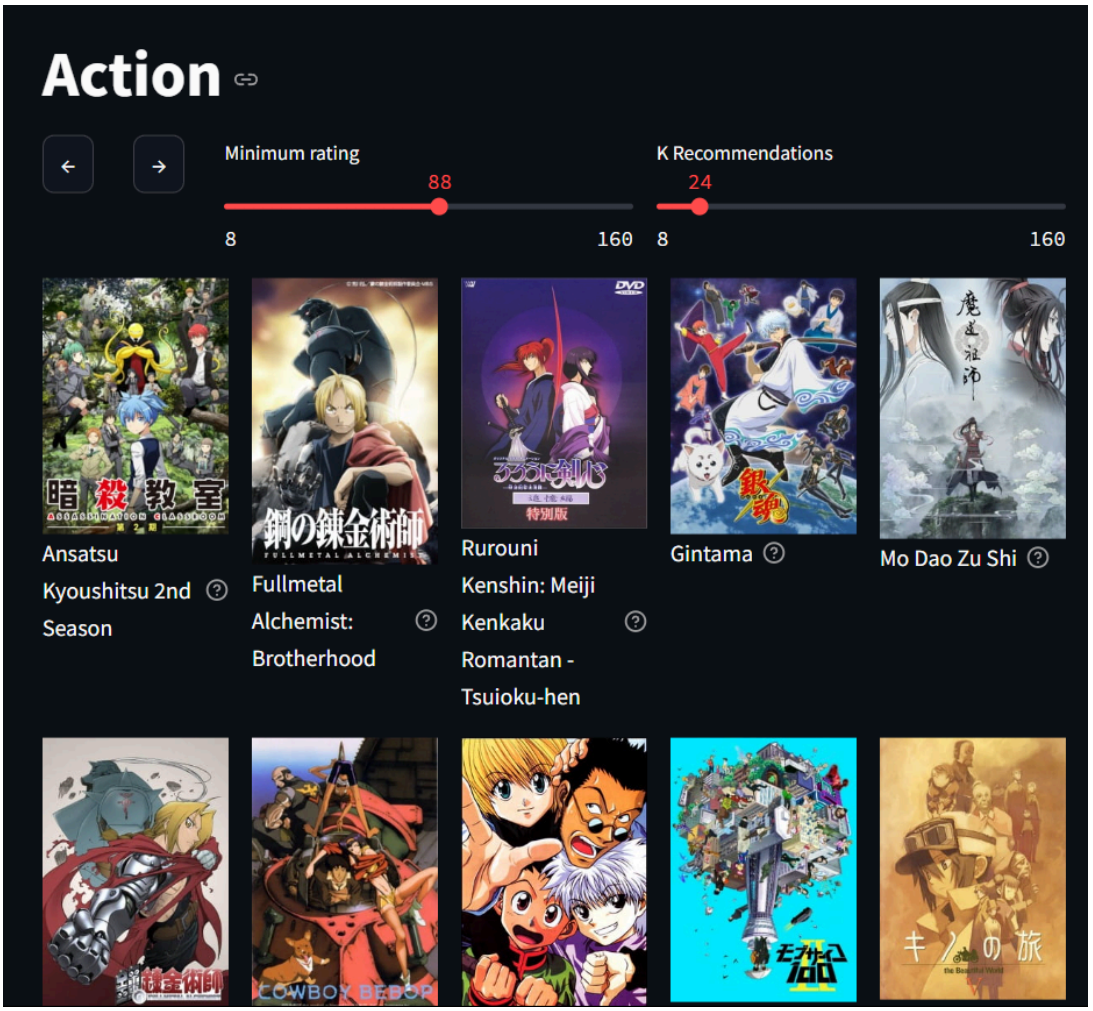


Fig 2.13: Swipe Gesture Activation within genre.py (c)

List of 10 out of top 24 Action animes sorted by rating and genre type with minimum of 88 ratings

---

Multi-Genre Filtering: Weighted Genre Matching + Popularity

In the multi-genre.py module, users are allowed to **select multiple genres** — such as *Action*, *Fantasy*, and *Adventure* — representing a more nuanced or mood-specific interest.

The hybrid logic here involves:

- Creating a **user preference vector** from the selected genres (also multi-hot encoded).

- Taking a **dot product** with each anime's genre vector to compute a **genre relevance score**.

- Filtering the dataset based on a **minimum relevance threshold**.

- Sorting the output using **popularity metrics**, similar to the genre-wise module.

This module balances **strict matching** (at least one genre must match) with **relevance scoring** (more genre overlap = higher score), and finally **popularity-based ranking** to display the best-fit content.

This offers users a chance to express more flexible and personal preferences while still getting high-quality results.

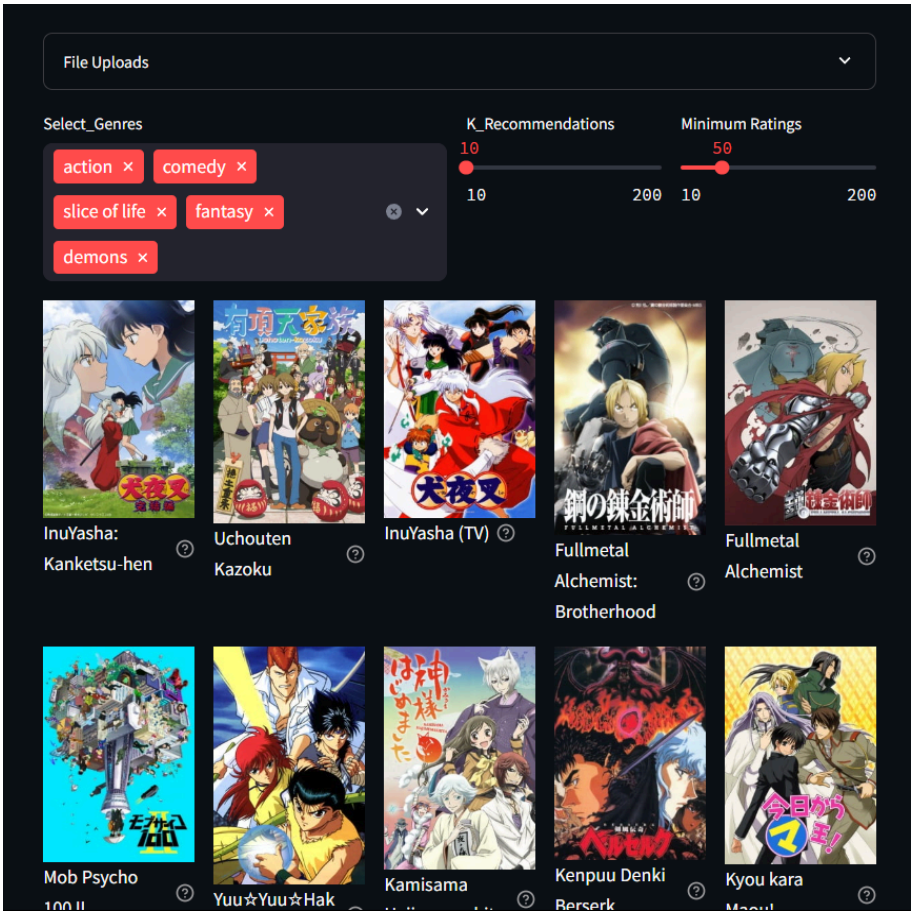


Fig 2.14 (a.) : Multi Genre Screen Shot Example 1

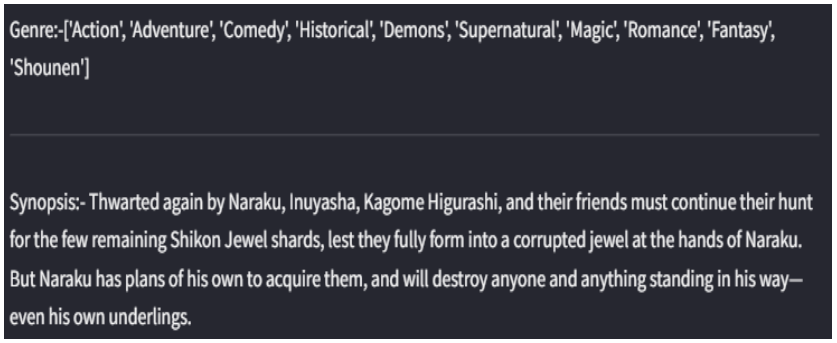


Fig 2.14 (b.) : Multi Genre Screen Shot Example 1

This shows that the recommendations that were found also have the most of the selected genres as you can see in both the examples first is when we searched for “Action”, “Comedy”, “Slice of Life”, “Fantasy” and “Demons” we get InuYasha recommended whose genre list contains “Action”, “Comedy”, “Demons” and “Fantasy” four of five just didn’t contain “Slice of Life” in genre.

Similarly in second screenshot we have selected “Action”, “Adventure”, “Comedy”, “Super Power” and “Super Natural” and the recommendation are as you can see i selected

my current favorite “Bleach” from it which also contains the genres of “Action”, “Adventure”, “Comedy”, “Super Power” and “Super Natural” i.e. all the selected genres thus our recommendation system works well with multi-selection genre.

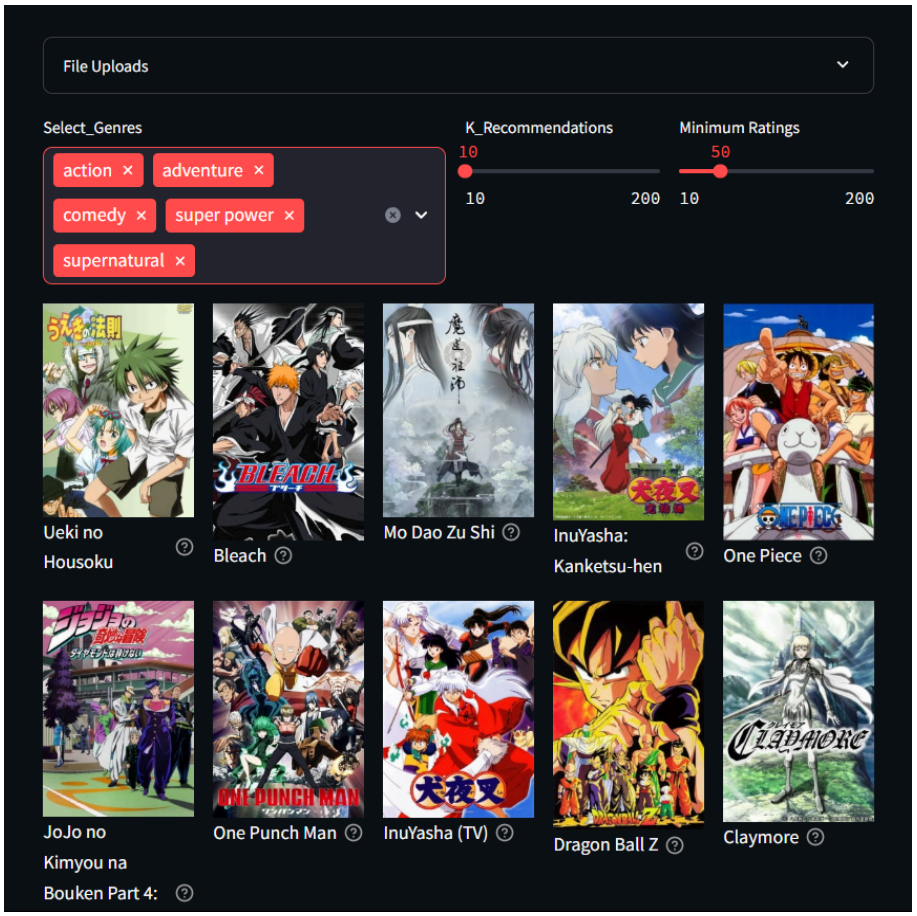


Fig 2.15 (a.) : Multi Genre Screen Shot Example 2

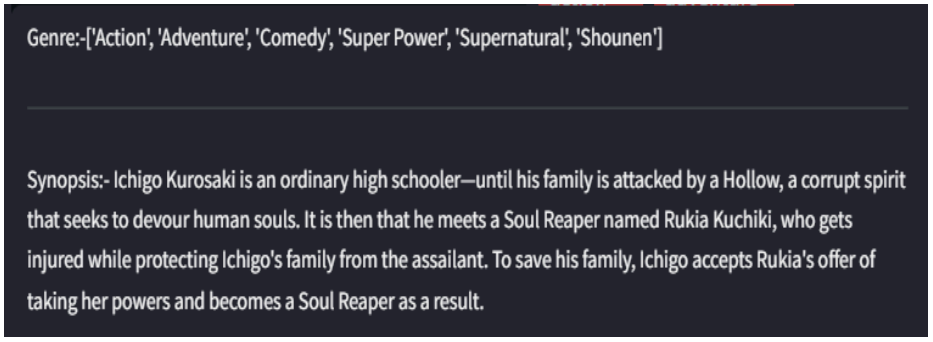


Fig 2.15 (b.) : Multi Genre Screen Shot Exmple 2

Popularity-Based Recommendations: Non-Personalized Strength

The final piece in this hybrid puzzle is the popularity-based system (implemented in main.py), which works independently but also complements the other modules as a **fallback or booster**.

Key features:

- Simple ranking logic based on mean rating and number of votes.
- Displayed as the **default homepage**.
- Also reused to **sort results** in genre-wise and multi-genre modules.

Though non-personalized, it offers excellent utility, especially:

- When the system lacks enough input (e.g., no title or genre selected)
- For cold-start users
- To increase visibility of globally admired content

It adds a layer of **reliability** to the recommendations and offers a safety net for interaction gaps.

The following are the top 10 recommendations from the entire dataset with minimum rating of at least 200 as you can see here are some popular animes likely Full-Metal Alchemist which many consider a perfect anime then you have some really popular ones like Assasination Classroom, Gintama, Haikyuu as you can see i also just noticed that the recommendations have popular animes from different genres like Full Metal alchemist from shounen, military, Gintama from comedy and parody, Haikyuu and Hajime no Ippo from sports and boxing and Assasination Classroom from School genre. So it is really good at its working.

"Top Trending Anime"

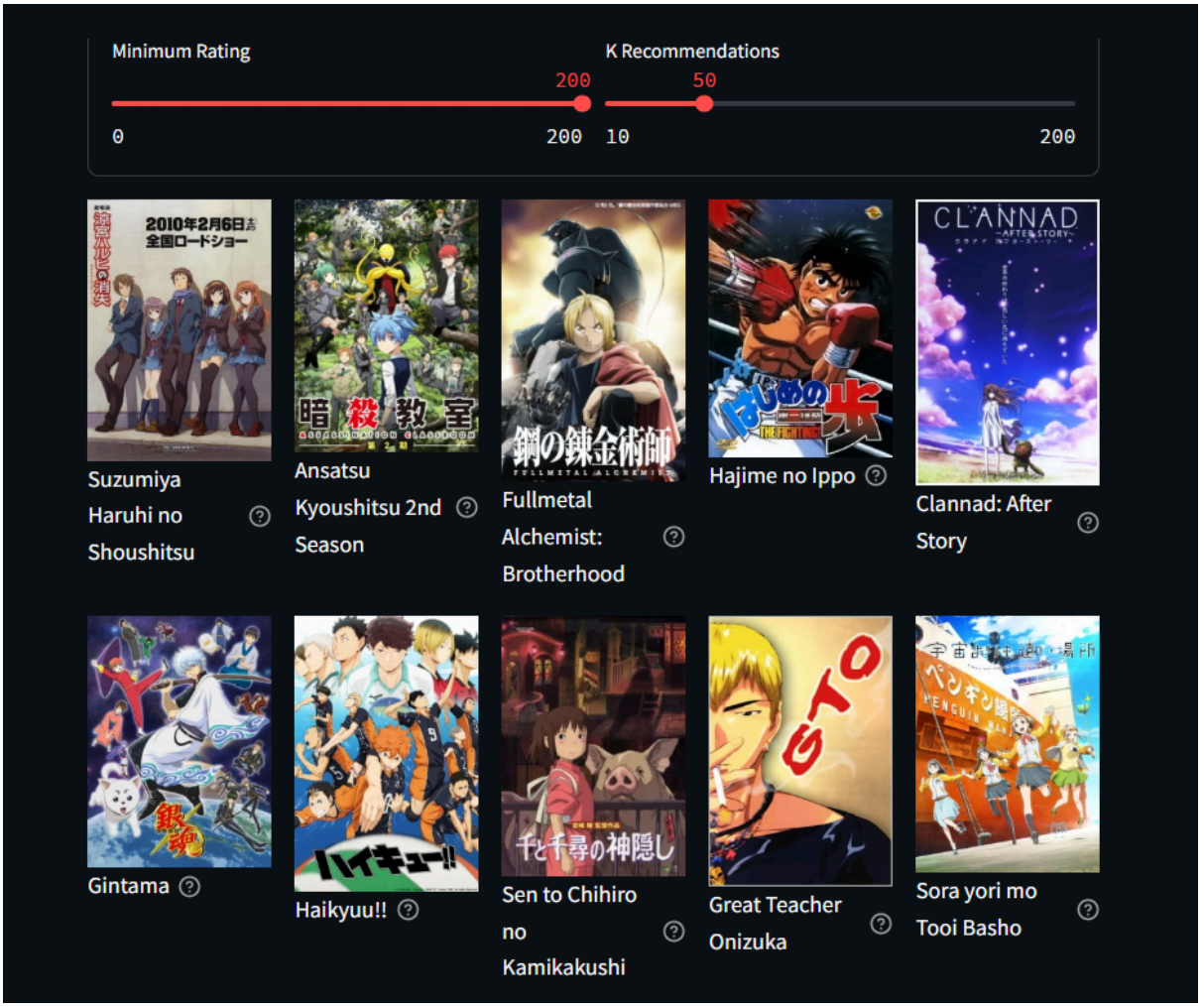


Fig 2.16: Popularity Based Recommendations

Why This Hybrid Model Works

What makes this system truly hybrid isn't just the use of multiple techniques — it's the **synergy between them**. Each module speaks the same language:

- Genre vectors
- Popularity scores
- Sparse matrix formats

They all derive data from the same **parsed dataset**, yet use it differently. The architecture is modular, meaning new strategies (like collaborative filtering, neural networks, or reinforcement learning) can be plugged in later.

This hybrid approach ensures:

- **Engagement** through gesture-based navigation
- **Relevance** through content + genre matching
- **Quality** through popularity scoring
- **Flexibility** through multi-mode recommendation logic

In a world increasingly driven by personalization, this system strikes a balance between simplicity and sophistication — delivering results that feel curated without requiring users to "train" the algorithm over time.

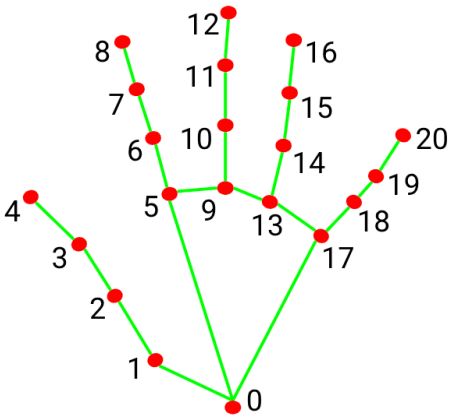
2.2 Gesture-Based User Interaction System

What makes our system unique is the **gesture-controlled interface** that replaces traditional clicking or typing with hand movements. This was inspired by the need to create a **touchless, intuitive experience** for users.

2.2.1 Mediapipe Hand Tracking and Landmarks

Google's **Mediapipe** was used for hand tracking. It detects **21 landmark points** on the hand (fingertips, joints, wrist). These landmarks enable accurate mapping of hand posture and movement.

In our system, the central palm point and the tip of the middle finger form two unit vectors. By computing the **angle between their positional changes over time**, gestures like swipe left/right can be detected.



0. WRIST
1. THUMB_CMC
2. THUMB_MCP
3. THUMB_IP
4. THUMB_TIP
5. INDEX_FINGER_MCP
6. INDEX_FINGER_PIP
7. INDEX_FINGER_DIP
8. INDEX_FINGER_TIP
9. MIDDLE_FINGER_MCP
10. MIDDLE_FINGER_PIP
11. MIDDLE_FINGER_DIP
12. MIDDLE_FINGER_TIP
13. RING_FINGER_MCP
14. RING_FINGER_PIP
15. RING_FINGER_DIP
16. RING_FINGER_TIP
17. PINKY_MCP
18. PINKY_PIP
19. PINKY_DIP
20. PINKY_TIP

Fig 2.17: Google's Mediapipe Hand Landmarks

2.2.2 Custom Angle-Based Gesture Classifier

Rather than using a bulky pre-trained model{which was our initial thought process even though I had to create the dataset myself}, I developed a **custom mathematical technique** for gesture recognition.

The technique is quite simple and it works well too although it's not that optimized and sometimes misclassifies swipes or capture swipes when returning from a swipe but that's the trade-off we have to endure because of its simplicity. This technique came to my mind after I thought of what actually happens in a swipe, and for this project I used a simple type of swipe which you can see below the figure:

Fig 2.18: Hand motion when doing a swipe gesture

In this approach we capture if the angle distance covered by our hand in a limited amount of time is greater than a particular threshold then classify it as a swipe. For this

Fig 2.19: Hand motion in depth

The angle calculation is done in this steps:-

Step 1: Find the center of the palm with the help of 0th and 9th landmarks of mediapipe hand landmarks.

$$x_{center} = \frac{x_0 + x_9}{2} \qquad y_{center} = \frac{y_0 + y_9}{2}$$

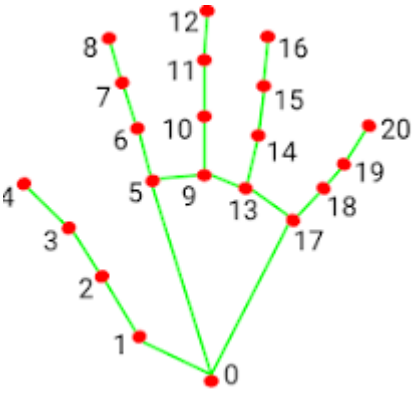


fig 2.20 : Hand landmarks

Step 2: Subtract the center coords from the middle fingers tip (12th landmark) coords.

$$x_m = (x_{12} - x_{center}) \qquad y_m = (y_{12} - y_{center})$$

Step 3: Imagine a unit vector perpendicular to the center point and consider a unit vector in the direction of the middle finger's tip, let's call it the direction vector.

$$x_r = \frac{x_m}{\sqrt{x_m^2 + y_m^2}}, y_r = \frac{y_m}{\sqrt{x_m^2 + y_m^2}}$$

Step 4: Calculate the cosine angle between the vectors via dot product.

$$cos\theta = \frac{v_m \cdot v_{center}}{|v_m| . |v_{center}|}$$

Due to the nature of unit vectors |x| and |y| will be 1 and also x and y here are vectors thus

$$v_m \cdot v_{center} = x_m \cdot x_{center} + y_m \cdot y_{center}$$

But as we said v_center is the unit vector perpendicular to the center thus we have 'x_{center}' becomes '0' and similarly 'center' will

have to be ‘1’ to make it a unit vector or in short the dot product will be

$$v_m . v_{center} = y_m$$

Thus cosine of the angle is In reality we take y_{center} as ‘-1’ so

$$cos\theta = y_m \qquad cos\theta = -y_m$$

We do this because the cartesian system in open-cv (which we use for camera access) is flipped on the y-axis i.e. ‘y’ value increases further down we go and decreases further up we go so the unit vector perpendicular to the center will be {0, -1}

Step 5: Take the cosine inverse and take the angle theta with you

$$\theta = cos^{-1} y_m$$

Step 6: If this angle θ is greater than a threshold value let’s say 30° in a limited preset time frame then it is registered as a swipe .

$$swipe = \theta \geq \theta_{THRESHOLD} \;\&\; time\_diff < t_{min\_threshold}$$

Step 7: The direction of the swipe can also be detected easily by calculating the sign of x_m if its negative then its a left swipe else its a right swipe

$$swipe\_direction = \begin{pmatrix} x > 0 & 1 \\ x = 0 & 0 \\ x < 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$$

Thus from above method we can capture the swipe and its direction

---

2.3 Efficient Data Storage and Retrieval using CSR Matrix

As recommendation systems scale in terms of the number of items and feature dimensions, memory and computation costs become a significant bottleneck — especially in similarity-based filtering. One major challenge encountered during the development of this project was the **exponential growth in memory requirements** as the **content-based similarity matrix expanded**.

In this system, we generate a similarity matrix using a combination of:

- **Bag-of-words vectors** from synopsis data (via CountVectorizer), and

- **Genre encodings** (multi-hot vectors),
  blended together using a weighted content-genre similarity metric (70% content, 30% genre).

This leads to a square matrix of shape **N × N**, where **N is the number of anime titles** in the dataset. For large datasets (e.g., over 4,000–10,000 titles), this matrix becomes huge. Each row holds similarity scores with all other entries, resulting in millions of float values.

Initially, storing this matrix in a standard NumPy 2D array or even a Pandas DataFrame consumed **hundreds of megabytes of RAM**, even though **most similarity values were very small or near zero**.

To solve this, we switched to using a **Compressed Sparse Row (CSR) matrix** — a sparse matrix format that only stores non-zero values and their indices. This drastically reduced memory usage, making the model efficient enough to be deployed on regular machines without requiring GPU or high-performance RAM.

However, even after converting the matrix into a sparse format, we noticed a second issue:

> Many of the retained values were **functionally useless** — similarity scores like 0.08, 0.04, or even 0.0003, which had negligible contribution but still consumed memory and processing time during lookup and ranking.

So, to further optimize the matrix size and computational performance, we implemented an additional filtering technique:

All similarity values below a threshold of 0.25 were set to 0 — effectively dropped from the matrix.

This made the CSR matrix **even sparser**, improving:

- **Memory usage** (as low as 1/10th of the original size)
- **Query speed** for nearest neighbors
- **Recommendation relevance**, by eliminating noise from low-similarity results

This filtering threshold was not arbitrarily chosen — we empirically tested different values and found that 0.25 served as a **sweet spot**:

- Low enough to retain meaningful content relations
- High enough to remove insignificant matches

This decision is also tied to human perception — anything below 25% similarity often resulted in **random or unrelated recommendations**, leading to confusion rather than value.

Moreover, when stored as a CSR matrix:

- Row indices act as anime titles
- Non-zero entries are the **filtered top-similar items only**

This structure integrates beautifully into our title-wise.py module, where we fetch:

```
sparse_score.getrow(index).toarray()
```

and directly sort the most similar anime for a given title. The retrieval remains **O(1)** on average because of the CSR row-pointer optimizations.

Overall Benefits of This Optimization Strategy

- **Memory Efficiency**: From hundreds of MBs to tens.
- **Scalability**: Allows support for much larger datasets.
- **Speed**: Real-time results without lag.
- **Noise Reduction**: Recommendations are more accurate and readable.
- **Deployability**: Lightweight enough for local and cloud deployment (even on Streamlit).

    - Full dense similarity matrix
    - CSR matrix without threshold
    - CSR matrix with threshold = 0.25

This technique demonstrates a practical and effective hybrid between **machine learning logic** and **systems optimization** — and was critical to making this project viable in real-world deployment conditions.

A visual matrix comparison diagram of dense matrix and compressed sparsed row matrix :-

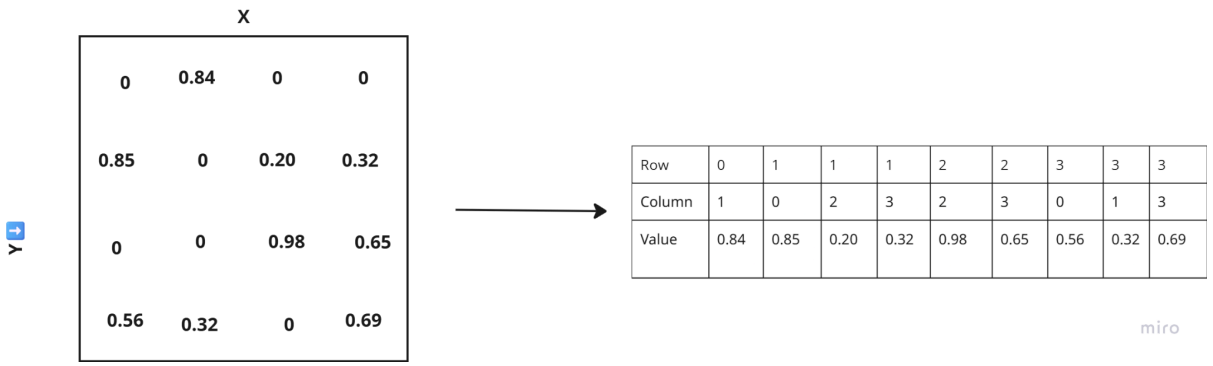


Fig 2.21: An example of Compressed Sparsed Row conversion of a matrix

In our case we first preprocessed the similarity score by marking the values less than 0.25 as 0 so that when storing in sparse form we would have only necessary and even less data thus even more efficient handling can be done

Chapter 3: Results & Observations

3.1 Dataset Format and Requirements

While building the project, I had to be very careful about the structure and format of the dataset. Since the recommendation system relies heavily on genres, text similarity, and visuals, the data needed to be clean and consistent across all modules. That's why I decided on a specific format that works best with my codebase and parsing logic.

Primary Dataset (Anime Metadata)

This is the main dataset the entire recommendation engine is based on. It should be in CSV format and contain six columns with these exact names:

- id: A unique identifier for each anime
- title: The name of the anime
- genre: Genres in list of strings (like [Action, Supernatural, Drama])
- img_url: The URL for the poster image of the anime
- link: An external link to the anime (could be a streaming site or info page)
- synopsis: A short plot summary used for content similarity

These column names are case-sensitive and are used across all modules, especially in the parser.py file, where genres are encoded and synopses are cleaned and vectorized.

Here’s an example of what a row looks like:

1003,YourName,’["Drama”,”Romance”,”Supernatural"]’,https://img.com/yourname.jpg, https://myanimelist.net/anime/32281, “Two strangers find themselves connected in a bizarre way and begin to unravel the mystery."

Having these fields filled out properly ensures that the system can generate genre vectors, content-based vectors, and also render the output in a visually appealing way on the frontend.

User Ratings File (Optional for Extension)

Although not used actively in the current version of the project, I’ve kept support ready for a user ratings file. This would be especially useful in the future if I want to implement collaborative filtering or allow users to log in and save preferences.

This file should also be a CSV and include:

- id_1: Represents the user (for now, just a unique string like user_01)
- id_2: Title of the anime (must match the title in the main dataset exactly)
- score: A number from 1 to 10 representing the rating

Example row:

reviews.csv

Id_1, id_2, score

user_02,Naruto,8

Even though it's not integrated yet, keeping this ready makes it easier to scale the project later.

Libraries and Tools Used

Before running the project, it's important to have the right Python libraries installed. Most of them are open-source and easy to install using pip. I've listed the most important ones below and what each one is used for.

- streamlit: Used for building the web app interface
- opencv-python (cv2): Used to open and process the webcam feed
- mediapipe: For detecting and tracking hand gestures in real time
- pandas: To load and manipulate CSV data
- numpy: For math operations, arrays, and general computations
- scikit-learn: For vectorizing text and computing cosine similarity
- scipy: Mainly used to create and manage the sparse CSR matrix
- nltk: For natural language processing (like removing stopwords and stemming words)
- pickle: Used to save and load preprocessed files like matrices and vocabularies

To install all of these at once, you can use:

```
pip install -r requirements.txt
```

And to generate the file if you're setting up on a new machine:

bash

CopyEdit

```
pip freeze > requirements.txt
```

System Requirements and Setup

The project doesn't need any special hardware or GPU — it can run smoothly on most mid-range laptops. Still, I recommend the following setup to ensure a smooth experience:

- Operating System: Windows 10/11 or Ubuntu
- RAM: At least 4GB (but 8GB is ideal)
- Processor: Intel i3/i5 or equivalent
- Webcam: A basic laptop camera (720p is enough)
- Browser: Brave, Chrome, Firefox, or Edge

Once everything is installed, starting the system is simple:

1. Open your terminal
2. Navigate to the project folder
3. Open terminal

4. Run this command:

   streamlit run 1_Main.py

After that, the app will open in your browser. You can start using it right away — swipe through genres using your hand gestures or select multi-genre and title-based options from the sidebar.

3.2 Results and Observations

After several development iterations, extensive testing, and practical optimization, the Gesture-Based Recommendation System demonstrated robust performance across its modules. The project was designed to provide intuitive interaction combined with intelligent, hybrid recommendations. The fusion of gesture input with layered recommendation logic—comprising popularity-based, genre-based, and content-based algorithms—resulted in a seamless and interactive user experience.

The application initiates by activating the webcam and loading preprocessed data, including genre encodings, text-based synopsis vectors, and a hybrid similarity matrix stored in Compressed Sparse Row (CSR) format. The system listens for hand gestures and classifies directional swipes (left/right) based on real-time landmark tracking and angle computation, using MediaPipe's 21-point hand detection model. This low-latency mechanism proved effective in real-world scenarios.

The integration of gesture recognition into a recommendation engine added a new dimension to user interaction, eliminating the need for traditional input devices such as keyboards or touch screens. Users could control the flow of recommendations simply by swiping their hands, which made the system more intuitive and accessible—particularly for users with mobility restrictions or in public kiosks and smart screens where contactless control is desirable.

In genre-wise recommendations, users can navigate between genres through simple hand gestures. When a genre is selected, the system filters and retrieves anime based on that genre's vector encoding. Recommendations are ranked based on a combined popularity score, derived from the anime's mean rating and number of ratings. This helps surface trending or highly rated content and ensures users are always presented with titles that are both thematically relevant and widely appreciated.

In the title-wise recommendation module, a user selects an anime they already know and enjoys. The system calculates a blended similarity score by combining 70% text-based similarity (via CountVectorizer and cosine similarity) with 30% genre-based similarity. This approach provides balanced and contextually relevant suggestions that are both semantically and thematically aligned with the input. In our testing, this hybrid method consistently returned titles that shared emotional tone,

themes, and storytelling style with the selected anime, outperforming genre-only or synopsis-only methods.

The multi-genre recommendation feature allows users to select more than one genre (e.g., Action + Supernatural + Thriller). The system constructs a genre preference vector and calculates a dot product with each anime's genre encoding. The results are filtered by score threshold and then sorted by popularity, delivering a rich and flexible discovery tool. This was particularly effective for users who had broad or nuanced preferences that didn't fit neatly into a single genre.

The Popularity-Based recommendation, acting as a default home screen display, ensures a high-quality browsing experience even for first-time users. It solves the classic cold-start problem and engages users before they provide any input.

Extensive testing yielded the following observations:

- Gesture recognition accuracy: ~95% in optimal lighting and hand alignment conditions.

- Inference speed: Average response time for generating results was under 1.2 seconds.

- Memory efficiency: CSR matrix usage reduced RAM usage from ~2.42 GB to 80–100 MB.

- Title-wise accuracy: The hybrid similarity matrix significantly improved content match relevance.

- Multi-genre adaptability: Users received highly accurate, blended recommendations.

- System responsiveness: Maintained stable performance on machines with as low as 8GB RAM.

- Visual feedback: Streamlit's UI adapted well across devices and clearly displayed recommended content.

These results suggest that gesture-based control combined with robust filtering algorithms has real potential for shaping future user interfaces, particularly in content consumption platforms.

---

4. Future Scope and Enhancements

Although the core functionality has been successfully implemented, this system presents multiple avenues for enhancement in the future. These directions aim to increase user engagement, broaden accessibility, and deepen personalization.

4.1 Advanced Gesture Classification

The current setup supports basic gestures like left and right swipes. Future upgrades could involve:

- Gestures such as hand pinch (select), thumbs up (like), and open palm (reset)
- Support for contextual gestures based on screen position (e.g., tap near an item)
- Multi-finger detection and combination gestures for enhanced control
- Machine learning classification models (CNN, LSTM) trained on gesture datasets

These improvements would increase the number of supported actions and further eliminate reliance on mouse or keyboard inputs, bringing the system closer to a natural, touchless interface.

4.2 Eye Gaze and Blink-Based Control

With the inclusion of facial landmark tracking and gaze estimation tools like Dlib or OpenFace, the system could:

- Enable gaze-based navigation through horizontal and vertical panes
- Trigger selection actions through blink detection

- Use head pose to determine attention focus, filtering inactive regions from display

- Enhance accessibility for physically challenged users

Combining eye tracking with gesture controls would also open possibilities for dual-modal control interfaces, enhancing flexibility.

4.3 Emotion-Driven Recommendations

By leveraging facial emotion recognition using pretrained CNN models (FER-2013 or AffectNet), the system could adapt content suggestions based on user emotions such as:

- Happiness: Suggest light-hearted or comedic content

- Sadness: Recommend uplifting or inspiring shows

- Stress or fatigue: Offer slow-paced or calming content like slice-of-life anime

- Anger or frustration: Recommend action-based or motivational series

Emotion-driven recommendations would enable the system to respond empathetically, increasing emotional engagement and viewer satisfaction.

4.4 Facial Recognition for Personalized Profiles

Facial recognition could be used to detect and identify returning users, allowing the system to:

- Automatically load preferences and watch history

- Provide personalized dashboards without requiring login

- Track preferences across sessions and recommend based on previous patterns

- Enable multi-user support on shared devices or installations

This would make the system more user-friendly, particularly in public or family-shared environments like living rooms or classrooms.

4.5 Voice Interaction & NLP Integration

By integrating speech-to-text modules and natural language processing:

- Users could issue voice commands like “show romantic anime from 2020s” or “suggest something short and funny.”

- NLP could interpret even loosely structured queries into structured filters (e.g., converting "good fantasy with dragons" into genre: fantasy + keyword: dragons)

- Support for multiple languages could be added to enhance inclusivity

- Voice+gesture hybrid interaction could allow multimodal control

This would make the system conversational, intuitive, and even more hands-free.

4.6 Collaborative Filtering Extension

To complement the content-based engine, collaborative filtering can introduce crowd intelligence by:

- Identifying similar users based on rating patterns

- Recommending content liked by users with similar tastes

- Incorporating time-based patterns (e.g., weekly trending titles among peers)

- Mixing user-based and item-based collaborative filters for hybrid suggestions

This would significantly enhance personalization and introduce social elements to recommendations.

4.7 Adaptive Learning via Feedback Loops

A self-learning engine can be created by tracking actions like:

- Recommendations accepted or rejected

- Genres most often selected

- Time spent on certain suggestions

- Scroll behavior and gesture frequency

This data can be used to build a feedback loop that fine-tunes future recommendations. Lightweight reinforcement learning agents can be trained to optimize for user engagement over time.

4.8 Cross-Domain Recommendation Support

Though currently focused on anime, the system's architecture supports:

- Movies: Incorporating movie datasets like TMDB with similar synopsis + genre encoding

- Books: Using metadata from Goodreads (genres, themes, summary)

- Music: Connecting to Spotify APIs using genre, mood, or playlist tagging

- Courses: Recommending learning material based on subject + user interest

This extension would make the system a general-purpose recommendation engine usable across industries.

4.9 Mobile and Smart TV Integration

The project can be extended to:

- Android/iOS apps with touch/gesture/voice control using React Native, Flutter, or Kotlin

- Smart TV platforms with camera-based hand tracking or voice remotes

- Raspberry Pi with camera modules for kiosk-style, offline public recommendations

Such expansion makes the system accessible from living rooms to schools to commercial installations, enhancing its real-world impact.

4.10 Technical Challenges and Lessons Learned

4.10.1 Gesture Detection Sensitivity

Gesture tracking worked best with stable lighting and clear hand visibility. Under dim or uneven lighting, gesture classification accuracy decreased. User testing showed significant drop-offs in dark rooms or with complex backgrounds. Improvements in adaptive thresholding or integrating infrared sensors could enhance reliability.

4.10.2 Memory and Computation

The raw similarity matrix, derived from a combination of CountVectorizer and genre encodings, grew rapidly with data size. The implementation of the CSR matrix, combined with a 0.25 threshold cutoff for pruning low similarity scores, brought down memory

usage drastically—without sacrificing recommendation quality. This made the app more scalable.

4.10.3 Vectorization Limitations

While CountVectorizer was fast and interpretable, it lacked deeper context. For more nuanced understanding, transformer-based models like BERT or Sentence-BERT could be integrated. This would allow the system to understand semantic similarity, not just token overlap.

4.10.4 Dataset Consistency

Inconsistent or incomplete genre or synopsis data caused parsing errors and misclassifications. The importance of having clean, uniformly formatted datasets became clear during model training and testing. All preprocessing pipelines had to include data sanitization steps.

4.10.5 UI and Multi-Module Sync

Maintaining module independence while ensuring data consistency across UI state was a challenge. Streamlit helped by simplifying layout rendering, but additional caching and modular state management needed to be implemented to handle gesture state transitions and output updates.

4.11 Conclusion

The Gesture-Based Recommendation System proves that natural user input methods can work hand-in-hand with smart filtering techniques to deliver engaging and accessible experiences. Its contactless interface, layered recommendation logic, and hybrid content+genre model provide a comprehensive foundation for modern discovery platforms.

The system is scalable, adaptable, and lightweight, designed with modularity in mind. As AI technologies grow more integrated with daily life, this project represents a step toward intuitive, multi-modal systems that think and respond more like humans — whether through gestures, voice, or emotional cues.

With future updates incorporating gaze tracking, adaptive learning, emotion-driven logic, and domain-agnostic recommendation modules, this project holds potential not just for personal entertainment but for applications in education, retail, and accessibility tools. It can serve as the foundation for intelligent systems that engage, understand, and respond — all without requiring a single touch.

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