## Pune Institute of Computer Technology Dhankawadi, Pune

### A SEMINAR REPORT ON

# DETECTION OF PHISHING WEBSITES USING MACHINE LEARNING TECHNIQUES

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DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER ENGINEERING
Academic Year 2021-22



# DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER ENGINEERING Pune Institute of Computer Technology Dhankawadi, Pune-43

#### **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the Seminar report entitled

# "DETECTION OF PHISHING WEBSITES USING MACHINE LEARNING TECHNIQUES"

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has satisfactorily completed a seminar report under the guidance of Prof. R.A Kulkarni towards the partial fulfillment of third year Computer Engineering Semester I, Academic Year 2021-22 of Savitribai Phule Pune University.

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#### Abstract

Phishing is the type of cyber-attack that is used to obtain sensitive user data including the login credentials and credit card details. It costs internet users billions of dollars per year. Attackers achieve the above goal through disguising illegal URLs as legitimate ones, attackers can induce users to visit the phishing URLs. Despite the fact that several ways for detecting phishing websites have been proposed, phishers have evolved their methods to beat these detection methods. Machine Learning is one of the most effective approaches for detecting these dangerous activities. This is due to the fact that most phishing attacks share some common characteristics that machine learning algorithms can detect. Advanced ML models based on feature selection methods and Neural networks have been quite more effective. I have compared the performance of different machine learning approaches for classification of URLs as legitimate or phishing URLs.

# Keywords

Phishing, Phishers, Classification, Cyber-attack, Machine-learning, Neural Networks, Feature selection.

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

Nowadays people do the majority of their work on digital platforms in their daily lives. In many ways, having a computer and access to the internet makes our work and personal lives easier. It assists us in timely completion of transactions and operations in the fields of finance, research, trade, entertainment, education, and engineering. With the advancement of mobile and wireless technologies, users who require access to a local network can now effortlessly connect to the Internet from anywhere and at any time. Despite the fact that this arrangement is extremely convenient, it has revealed significant information gaps. As a result, people in cyberspace must take precautions against potential cyber-attacks.

Cybercriminals, pirates, non-malicious (white-capped) attackers, and hacktivists are all examples of people who can carry out attacks. The goal is to gain access to the computer or the information it holds, as well as to acquire personal information in various methods. The most targeted industries are financial institutions, payment, e-commerce, Logistics, cryptocurrency, social media and web mails. These attacks have cost internet users billions of dollars per year.

The most common and dangerous of these attacks is phishing. Cybercriminals employ email or other social media communication channels in this type of attack. The attackers fool the victims into thinking the message came from a reputable source, such as a bank or an e-commerce site. As a result, they attempt to gain access to their personal data. Using this information, attackers get access to their victims' accounts. Thus, it results in both monetary and non-monetary losses.

Such attacks are generally carried out through malicious websites that steal all kinds of personal data that can be exploited. Traditional classification techniques such as blacklisting, regular expression, and signature matching are challenged in the identification of malicious URLs due to large data volumes, shifting patterns over time, and intricate relationships between features. Several dangerous websites, unsurprisingly, do not appear to have been blacklisted. A URL may be used to track down any website, much as any file on a computer can be found by specifying its filename. URLs are the addresses of resources on the WWW. For URL https://www.google.com, the protocol identifier is HTTPS.Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure (HTTPS) is used to fetch hypertext documents. Other protocols include DomainName System (DNS), File Transfer Protocol (FTP), etc. For URL https://www.google.com, the resource name is www.google.com. The resource identifier is the address of a webpage on the internet.

The proposed work is based upon identifying the malicious URLs by feature extraction and further classification with help of various ML classifiers. And thus, examining the evaluation metrics for various machine learning classifiers.

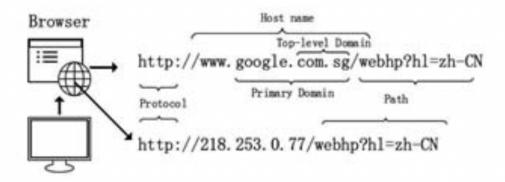


Figure 1: URL Structure

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Shantanu, Janet, B., Joshua Arul Kumar, R. (2021). Malicious URL Detection: A Comparative Study. 2021 International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Smart Systems (ICAIS).

# 2 MOTIVATION

The sectors such as e-commerce and online banking have grown multi-folds in recent years. And a major boom in this sector was seen during the pandemic in the past two years when people couldn't go out to buy stuff and had to do it through online mode. People are now much inclined toward online purchasing and banking rather than the traditional methods. And with this rise in online business there is significant rise in the cyber attacks such as phishing in which phishers try to exploit users and try to gain sensitive information from them through phishing websites. Such attacks have cost internet users more than billions of dollars per year. The reasons why people are getting duped are they are not well educated about these frauds and attacks and secondly it sometimes becomes hard for a human to identify which websites are legitimate and which are phishing.

Thus, a machine learning approach which would extract important features and would be trained by advanced ML algorithms such as xgboost will help identify users which URLs are legitimate and which aren't , is a good approach to solve this problem.

# 3 LITERATURE SURVEY

The Following table shows the literature survey by comparing techniques propose in various references:

Table 1: Literature survey

Sr no.	Paper Title	Summary	Limitations
1	Detection of Phishing Websites by Using Machine Learning-Based URL Analysis	trained only with the features obtained from the URL. is expected to classify in a shorter time than other models	Accuracy and F-measure obtained is less.
2	Phishing Web Page Detection Methods: URL and HTML Features Detection	rules-based method with the aim of making the application more effective in terms of accuracy and faster detection ability	Features not selected optimally  Lesser accuracy
3	Fuzzy Rough Set Feature Selection to Enhance Phishing Attack Detection	Fuzzy Rough Set (FRS) to select the most effective features. Best accuracy achieved was 91.46%	Hard to implement. Lesser accuracy
4	Detecting Phishing Websites through Deep Reinforcement Learning	The proposed model can adapt to the dynamic behaviour of the phishing websites and thus learn the features associated with phishing website detection.	Not optimised for real-world implementation. Only lexical features were considered Parameters not tuned

# DETECTION OF PHISHING WEBSITES USING MACHINE LEARNING TECHNIQUES

5	OFS- NN: An Effective Phishing Websites Detection Model Based on Optimal Feature Selection and Neural Network	FS-NN, an effective phishing website detection model based on the optimal feature and neural network	Hard to implement. Takes time to select features.
6	Proactive Phishing Sites Detection	authors proposed suspicious domain names generation and to predicts likely phishing web sites from the given legitimate brand domain name and scores and judges suspects by calculating various indexes to detect phishing websites	Method based on heuristic therefore not automatic.

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#### 4 A SURVEY ON PAPERS

## 4.1 Detection of Phishing Websites by Using Machine Learning-Based URL Analysis

The goal of this work is to develop a phishing detection system that analyses the URL of a webpage. In the literature review, it was discovered that obtaining effective characteristics from the URL improves the classification accuracy. Third-party service usage, site style, CSS, content, meta information, and other elements can all help to increase accuracy. These characteristics, on the other hand, will increase the time it takes to classify new websites that need to be categorised. The suggested model, which was trained solely on the features extracted from the URL, is projected to classify in less time than other models. In light of this, the study will focus solely on URL analysis. As a consequence, the classification results of collected features in various machine learning techniques are compared.

# 4.2 Phishing Web Page Detection Methods: URL and HTML Features Detection

In this study, the author presents a rules-based strategy with the goal of improving the application's accuracy and detection speed. This study also compared numerous machine learning algorithms to determine if they improved detection accuracy. The authors then compare and contrast some of these strategies to come up with a more effective strategy for detecting phishing web sites.

# 4.3 Fuzzy Rough Set Feature Selection to Enhance Phishing Attack Detection

Mahdieh Zabihimayvan et al. employed the Fuzzy Rough Set (FRS) technique to pick the most effective features, claiming that the maximum F-measure gained by FRS feature selection is 95 percent when utilising Random Forest classification.

# 4.4 Detecting Phishing Websites through deep reinforcement learning

To model and detect malicious URLs, Moitrayee Chatterjee et al. devised a model based on deep reinforcement learning. The suggested model may learn the properties related with phishing website identification by adapting to the dynamic behaviour of phishing websites

### 4.5 OFS- NN: An Effective Phishing Websites Detection Model Based on Optimal Feature Selection and Neural Network

The problem of overfitting in phishing classifiers was emphasised by

Erzhou Zhu et al., who proposed FS-NN, an effective phishing website detection model based on the ideal feature and neural network.

#### 4.6 Proactive Phishing Sites Detection

Akihito Nakamura et al. evaluated phishing mitigation strategies such as blacklists, heuristics, visual similarity, and machine learning and determined that these techniques have limitations in dealing with zero-hour assaults and proactive phishing website identification. The authors advocated generating suspicious domain names and predicting possible phishing web sites from a legal brand domain name, as well as scoring and judging suspects using multiple indexes to detect phishing websites.

### 5 PROBLEM DEFINITION AND SCOPE

#### 5.1 Problem Definition

Identification of Phishing websites (URLs) based on various factors such as IP address, URL length, Shortening Service, HTTPS token etc.

#### 5.2 Scope

The features which are crucial and need to be considered for getting highly accurate ML model to classify legitimate and phishing websites are having ip address, URL length, shortening service, having @ symbol, SSL state, request url, favicon, dns record and some more. These features have a major impact on the optimization of results.

For these the data is first processed and all optimal features are extracted and then the data is trained with some ML algorithms and then the best fit model is gained.

# 6 DIFFERENT ALGORITHMS USED FOR PHISHING WEBSITES DETECTION

#### 6.1 KNN

KNN is a ML technique for regression and classification problems. Feature similarity is used to predict the values for the new data points. The new datapoint is assigned its value depending on how closely it resemble the points in the training set.

#### 6.2 SVM

SVM is a supervised machine learning (ML) technique that can be used to solve regression and classification issues. SVM's major goal is to establish a decision boundary that divides n-dimensional space into separate classes so that a new data point can be appropriately classified in the future.

#### 6.3 Decision Tree

A tree-like structure is used to perform classification in the Decision Tree algorithm. In this algorithm the dataset is separated into small subsets which are used to generate Tree Nodes . These tree nodes can be Leaf Nodes or Decision nodes depending upon their function.

#### 6.4 Random Forest

The random forest algorithm uses several different decision trees to anticipate the outcome. It's a collection of decision trees. To generate more precise answers, many decision trees are blended together. It aids in the elimination of decision tree flaws.

#### 6.5 XGboost

XGBoost is a distributed gradient boosting toolkit that has been tuned for efficiency, flexibility, and portability. It uses the Gradient Boosting framework to create machine learning algorithms. XGBoost is a parallel tree boosting (also known as GBDT, GBM) algorithm that solves a variety of data science issues quickly and accurately.

# 7 METHODOLOGY

#### 7.1 Workflow

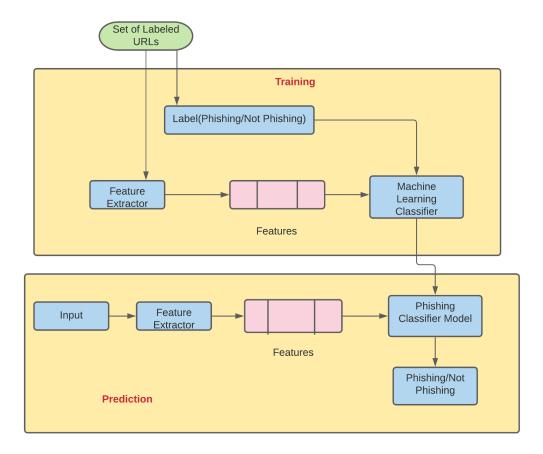


Figure 2: Overall itinerary planning framework: Workflow

#### 7.2 Mathematical model

 $N_{L\mapsto L}$  =Number of legitimate websites classified as legitimate

 $N_{L\mapsto P}$  =Number of legitimate websites misclassified as phishing

 $N_{P\mapsto L}$  =Number of phishing websites misclassified as legitimate

 $N_{P\mapsto P}$  =Number of phishing websites classified as phishing

acc = Accuracy

r = Recall

p = Precision

 $F_1 = \text{F1 Score}$ 

$$acc = \frac{N_{L \mapsto L} + N_{P \mapsto P}}{N_{L \mapsto L} + N_{P \mapsto L} + N_{P \mapsto P}}$$

$$r = \frac{N_{P \mapsto P}}{N_{P \mapsto L} + N_{P \mapsto P}}$$

$$p = \frac{N_{P \mapsto P}}{N_{L \mapsto P} + N_{P \mapsto P}}$$

$$F_1 = \frac{2pr}{p+r}$$

#### 7.3 Algorithm

#### 7.3.1 KNN

```
procedure KNN

Classify(X,Y,x)
X:Traning data
Y:class lables of X
x: unknown sample

for i=1 to m do

Compute distance d(X_i,x)
end for

Compute set I containing indices for the k smallest distances d(X_i,x)
return majority label for (Y_i \text{ where } i \in I)
```

#### 7.3.2 SVM

```
Require: X and y loaded with training labeled data, \alpha \Leftarrow 0 or \alpha \Leftarrow partially trained SVM

C \Leftarrow some value (10 for example)

repeat

for all \{x_i, y_i\}, \{x_j, y_j\} do optimize \alpha_i and \alpha_j

end for

until no change in \alpha or other constraint criteria met

Ensure: Retain only the support vectors i>0
```

#### 7.3.3 Decision Tree

```
Input: S, where S=set of classified instances
Output: Decision Tree
Require: S \neq \phi, num_attributes>0
procedure BUILDTREE
      repeat
         \max Gain \leftarrow 0
         splitA \leftarrow null
         e \leftarrow \text{Entropy}(\text{Attributes})
         for all Attributes a in S do
            gain \leftarrow InformationGain(a,e)
            if gain > maxGain then
               maxGain \leftarrow gain
               splitA \leftarrow a
            end if
         end for
         Partition(S,splitA)
      until all partitions processed
end procedure
```

#### 7.3.4 Random Forest

```
To generate c classifiers:
      for i=1 to c do
             Randomly sample the training data D with replacement to produce D_i
             Create a root node, N_i containing D_i
             Call BuildTree(N_i)
      end for
      BuildTree(N)
      if N contains instances of only one class then
          return
      else
          Randomly select x\% of the possible splitting features in N
          Select the feature F with the highest information gain to split on
         Create f child nodes of N, N_1, ..., N_f, where F has f possible values
(F_1, ...., F_f)
         for i=1 to f do
             Set the contents of N_i to D_i is all instances in N that match F_i
             Call BuildTree(N_i)
             end for
      end if
7.3.5
         XGBoost
      M-Number of base learners
      T-Number of leaves in tree
      w^*-Optimised leaf weight
      L-left branch
      R-right branch
             Data: Dataset and hyperparameters
             Initialize f_o(x);
             for k=1,2,...,M do
                Calculate g_k = \frac{\partial L(y,f)}{\partial f}

Calculate h_k = \frac{\partial^2 L(y,f)}{\partial f^2}

Determine the structure by choosing splits with maximised gain
                A = \frac{1}{2} [\frac{G_L^2}{H_L} + \frac{G_R^2}{H_R} - \frac{G^2}{H}]
                Determine the leaf weight w^* = -\frac{G}{H}
                Determine the base learner \hat{b}(x) = \sum_{j=1}^{H} wI;
                Add trees f_k(x) = f_{k-1}(x) + \widehat{b}(x);
             end
             Result: f(x) = \sum_{k=0}^{M} f_k(x)
```

### 8 DATASET DESCRIPTION

The dataset is taken from the PhishTank website. The dataset has around 11,000 sample websites URL, 90 percent of URls are used in the training phase and 10 percent in testing phase. Each URL is marked either phishing or legitimate.

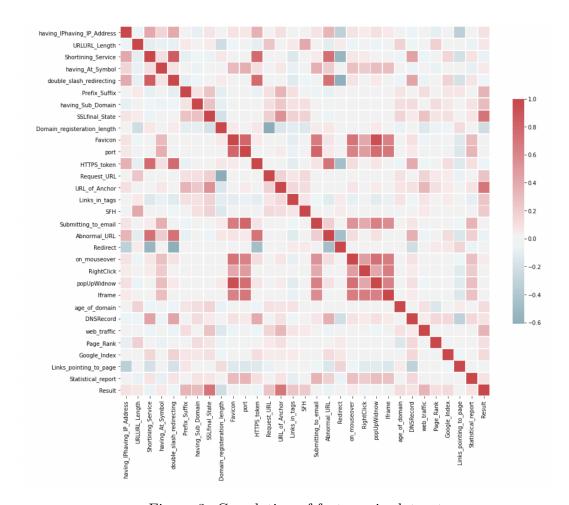


Figure 3: Correlation of features in dataset

#### 9 IMPLEMENTATION

```
KNN
In [39]: KNeighbors_clf=KNeighborsClassifier(3)
                            Cross_val_scores = cross_validate(KNeighbors_clf, X, y, cv=fold_count, scoring=scoring)
KNeighbors_clf_score = mean_score(cross_val_scores)
print(KNeighbors_clf_score)
                             {'fit_time': 0.11297237873077393, 'score_time': 0.3535628795623779, 'test_accuracy': 0.9527809643818579, 'test_recall': 0.9629
682715658324, 'test_precision': 0.9527832046787947, 'test_f1': 0.95782786394066}
In [42]: ###linea
                            ####Inear
linear_olf = svm.SVC(kernel='linear')
cross_val_scores = cross_validate(linear_olf, X, y, cv=fold_count, scoring=scoring)
linear_svc_olf_score = mean_score(cross_val_scores)
print(linear_svc_olf_score)
                            ###poly
poly_clf = svm.SVC(kernel='poly')
cross_val_scores = cross_validate(poly_clf, X, y, cv=fold_count, scoring=scoring)
poly_svc_clf_score = mean_score(cross_val_scores)
print(poly_svc_clf_score)
                            ###fbf
rfbf_lf = svm.SVC(kernel='rbf')
cross_val_scores = cross_validate(rbf_clf, X, y, cv=fold_count, scoring=scoring)
rbf_svc_clf_score = mean_score(cross_val_scores)
print(rbf_svc_clf_score)
###sigmoid
                             ####sigmoid
sigmoid_clf = svm.SVC(kernel='sigmoid')
cross_val_scores = cross_validate(sigmoid_clf, X, y, cv=fold_count, scoring=scoring)
sigmoid_svc_clf_score = mean_score(cross_val_scores)
print(sigmoid_svc_clf_score)
                            \(\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac}{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\frac{\fr
                            Descision Tree
In [47]: dtree_clf=DecisionTreeClassifier()
    cross_val_scores = cross_validate(dtree_clf, X, y, cv=fold_count, scoring=scoring)
    dtree_score = mean_score(cross_val_scores)
    print(dtree_score)
                            {'fit_time': 0.02145226001739502, 'score_time': 0.0037374973297119142, 'test_accuracy': 0.9659887246037655, 'test_recal1': 0.9714145813536058, 'test_precision': 0.9676815772041456, 'test_f1': 0.9695318553822136}
In [32]: rforest_clf=RandomForestClassifier()
    cross_val_scores = cross_validate(rforest_clf, X, y, cv=fold_count, scoring=scoring)
    rforest_clf_score = mean_score(cross_val_scores)
    print(rforest_clf_score)
                             {'fit_time': 0.4361262321472168, 'score_time': 0.021941876411437987, 'test_accuracy': 0.9726827751548527, 'test_recal1': 0.9814847956921128, 'test_precision': 0.9698521059240438, 'test_f1': 0.9756226033690053}
                            Gradient Boosting With XGBoost
In [34]: XGB clf=XGBClassifier()
                            XGB_clf_scores = cross_validate(XGB_clf, X, y, cv=fold_count, scoring=scoring)
XGB_clf_score= mean_score(cross_val_scores)
print(XGB_clf_score)
                             {'fit_time': 0.5060725927352905, 'score_time': 0.0062372684478759766, 'test_accuracy': 0.9712358750705734, 'test_recall': 0.97 90470911202618, 'test_precision': 0.9696243951193955, 'test_f1': 0.9742930356745975}
```

Figure 4: Implementation of different classifiers

# 10 RESULTS

The following table represents the train time, test time, accuracy, recall, precision and f1 score for different ML classifiers.

Table 2: Classification results for different methods

Classifier	train time(s)	test time(s)	accuracy	recall	precision	F1 score
KNN	0.1129	0.3535	0.9527	0.9629	0.9527	0.9578
SVM_linear	1.6475	0.0539	0.9277	0.9455	0.9262	0.9357
Decision Tree	0.0214	0.0037	0.9659	0.9714	0.9676	0.9695
Random Forest	0.4361	0.0219	0.9726	0.9814	0.9698	0.9756
XGBoost	0.5060	0.0062	0.9832	0.9810	0.9872	0.9768

### 11 CONCLUSION

ML classifiers were implemented and tested on the phishing website dataset, which consisted of 6157 authentic websites and 4898 phishing websites, in this study. The examined classifiers were KNN , SVM , Decision Tree , Random forest , XGBoost. The results are shown in table 2. From the table it can be said that excellent results were gained in ensembling classifiers like as Random forest and XGBoost in terms of both computation time and accuracy

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# **Curiginal**

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W	URL: https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/OFS-NN%253A-An-Effective-Phishing-Websites-Detection-on-Zhu-Chen/7767c27d29651413b4fc0e1af63d313d82ffde49 Fetched: 2021-11-16 06:58:00	88	1
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W	URL: http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/8730309 Fetched: 2021-11-16 06:58:00		1
W	URL: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/pmc8504731/ Fetched: 2021-11-16 06:58:00		1