Optimization of Traffic Light Timing Using Supervised Machine Learning and Reinforcement Learning in AnyLogic Simulation

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***Abstract*—Urban traffic congestion is a typical event city-wise, which in the roads, has been the leading cause of the overall increase in traffic time, the consumption of fuel, and environmental pollution. This article introduces a holistic method for the optimization of traffic light timings by using a hybrid model consisting of supervised machine learning (ML) and reinforcement learning (RL) in the AnyLogic simulation environment. The main instant of engagement of this research is the intensification of the traffic light of a short road segment (intersection) as it is the road that leads to the double stops, and thus may cause congestion. The training of a SL model by processing real-world traffic data with the help of a supervised machine learning model, responsible for the detection and recognition of the type of traffic events occurring, and dynamic optimization with the use of a reinforcement learning model, was the method chosen to solve the problem of congestion. An external dataset of traffic light durations and relevant met-rics was utilized to develop and refine the ML model. The findings indicate a dramatic decline in the length of peak wait times, and furthermore, a noticeable decrease in the overall traffic congestion which, in turn, points to the usefulness of using machine learning algorithms like some traffic management systems.**

***Index Terms*—Traffic light optimization, supervised machine learning, reinforcement learning, AnyLogic simulation, traffic management, urban congestion.**

I. Acknowledgements

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the following individuals and organizations who have supported and contributed to this project:

- **Dr.Ziad Kobti**: For his invaluable guidance and feedback throughout the project, helping us refine our methodology and approach.
- **The Department of Computer Science at the University of Windsor**: For providing the resources and facilities necessary for the successful completion of this project.
- **IBM Cloud Services**: For offering cloud computing resources that facilitated the large-scale simulations and machine learning model training.

II. Introduction

A. Problem Statement

The problem of urban traffic congestion in the cities is still one of the most important issues during the 21st century because of the existence of transportation systems that are both slow and inefficient. The spokesperson of the Urban Traffic Congestion Team reported that Intersections that face severe congestion this is due to the fact that they are intersections where clusters of different cars meet. These traffic signals are the early traditional traffic control equipments that have their own pre-decided time plans but the piece of information might rarely be wrong that fails to function in real time. In the case of not adapting to the fluctuating flow of the vehicles and thus failing to perform optimally, such systems increase the waiting time for the motorists. This problem can be solved through the application of intelligent traffic control systems which will enhance the adaptation and optimization of the urban mobility system by acquiring real-time data and processing it.

B. Motivation

The idea behind this research is the felt necessity of making traffic management solutions that are much keener on top of the urban road traffic conditions. Traffic parameter values and arrival rates are time-varying since they respond to various parameters such as weather or construction which are non-stationary events. The conventional traffic signals, which have been regulated for particular traffic arrangements, do not include some new data from the newly varying traffic lights' patterns in recent days within the city. We are targeting a smart traffic signal controller that can self-learn by means of fast decision-tree algorithm and further decision-making to match with historical traffic patterns. The long-range intention and the only one is to make traffic flow better and, by so doing, to take over the jam of cars, that is to say, to thumb a ride at the transit way.

C. Background

Traffic lights' optimization in the old days comprised using either set timetables or simple adaptive algorithms. Ideally, fixed schedules are good when there are no changes in traffic then they can respond accordingly, but adaptive systems have some major limitations. Machine learning and reinforcement learning have recently been reported to pose a solution to the traffic light control problem. Supervised machine learning algorithms gather historical data to which they are trained and predict the best traffic light timings, while reinforcement learning AI agents adapt and optimize signal timings in real-time based on the ongoing traffic conditions.

D. Objectives/Hypothesis

This project aims to integrate supervised machine learning and reinforcement learning to optimize traffic light timings at a double intersection. The primary objectives are:

- To build a supervised ML model which can foresee the best traffic signal schedule based on the past data of the traffic.
- To implement a reinforcement learning algorithm that can dynamically adjust signal timings in response to real-time traffic conditions.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the hybrid approach in improving traffic flow and reducing congestion at the simulated intersection.

A popular belief is that using the ML supervised for making predictive models and the RL for dynamic adjustments will give far better quality of solutions for traffic management that the traditional fixed-timing systems do.

E. Report Breakdown

The report is structured to provide a comprehensive overview of the project, including:

- An introduction that outlines the problem, motivation, and objectives.
- A review of related work to contextualize the research and highlight existing approaches to traffic light optimization.
- A detailed description of the approach, including assumptions, environment setup, and the integration of ML and RL techniques.
- An experimental setup and demonstration section that outlines the simulation configuration, experimental procedures, and results.
- A discussion of the findings, including verification and validation of the results.
- A conclusion summarizing the achievements, limitations, and potential benefits of the proposed system.
- Future work directions and potential applications of the research.

III. Related Work

A. Traffic Light Optimization Techniques

Old ways of managing traffic lights have been antiquated by the use of fixed-time streetlight patterns that are concise set program gate systems and will not make real-time adjustments if there is a change in traffic condition. They are the reason behind the poor flow of traffic majority of the time, especially during peak hours or sudden traffic incidents. Furthermore, a new kind of signal control technology, mainly loop detectors and real-time data, has been made with the limitation of no longer dependent on fixed times to address the problems caused them. Yet, the main difficulty, for instance, lies in their lack of proper traffic pattern prediction and accurate response when the pattern changes.

B. Machine Learning in Traffic Management

Especially in the field of traffic management, in an effort to do better, machine learning has become a prevalent technique to a large extent. In fact, the field of supervised learning has used regression models along with algorithms like decision trees to review old traffic data and then to forecast traffic conditions. During the use of these models, the controller in the software learns from the past data and later it recognizes the patterns in the traffic that help to direct the signal change. In recent years, several defiant research have been conducted which express that machine learning models can amend traffic signal control by giving out more accurate data longer time span so as compared to the traditional methods.

C. Reinforcement Learning for Traffic Signal Control

Reinforcement learning (RL) has been under the limelight because it is capable now to automatically optimize traffic signal control in dynamic environments. RL algorithms Q-learning and Deep Q Networks (DQN) are the ones which are able to learn optimal policies through the environmet. A case relating to the domain of traffic signal control is the adaptation of RL agents in which signal timing varies in accordance with the traffic volume in real-time and with the feedback obtained during the simulation. In other words, it is a process through which the agent is learning and refining its behavior that ensues making it apt for the intricate and erratic traffic conditions.

IV. Approach

A. Assumptions and Environment Setup

1) Assumptions: The development of the traffic light optimization system is based on several key assumptions:

- **Traffic Patterns**: The simulated traffic patterns, which include differences in traffic volume between peak and off-peak hours and the presence of various vehicle types (cars, lorries, trucks), are representative of real-world settings.
- **Dataset Quality**: The external dataset used for training the ML model is comprehensive and accurately reflects

historical traffic conditions, including traffic light durations, vehicle counts, and congestion levels.
- **Simulation Stability**: The simulation environment is stable and does not take into consideration outside variables that could impact traffic flow, such as weather, road closures, or significant traffic events.

2) Environment Setup: The simulation environment is configured to replicate a real-world traffic scenario with the following components:

- **Intersection Layout**: The simulation consists of a double intersection with four traffic signals, each of which manages more than one lane dedicated to various vehicle types. The intersections are made to be the same as those in real life with the inclusion of green, yellow, and red lights.
- **Traffic Flow Model**: The traffic flow is modeled based on various traffic scenarios, including peak hours, off-peak times, and random traffic events. Vehicle movements are simulated using realistic traffic flow models that account for different vehicle types and driver behaviors.With realistic traffic flow models that take into consideration various vehicle kinds and driving styles, vehicle movements are simulated.
- **Parameter Calibration**: Expert advice and historical data are used to calibrate signal timings, vehicle arrival rates, and other simulation parameters. The simulation will faithfully replicate actual traffic circumstances thanks to this calibration.

B. Data Preprocessing and Machine Learning Implementation

1) Dataset Description: The external dataset used for this project contains detailed records of traffic light durations and associated traffic metrics. Key attributes of the dataset include:

- **Traffic Light Durations**: Duration of green, yellow, and red phases for each traffic signal, recorded at different times of the day and under varying traffic conditions.
- **Vehicle Counts**: Counts of vehicles passing through the intersection during different signal phases, including cars, lorries, and trucks.
- **Congestion Levels**: Measurements of congestion levels, including average wait times and queue lengths for each signal phase.

2) Data Preprocessing: The preprocessing steps for the dataset include:

- **Cleaning and Filtering**: Removal of incomplete or erroneous records, and filtering of data to focus on relevant attributes such as signal durations and vehicle counts.
- **Normalization and Scaling**: Normalization of numerical features to ensure consistency in data representation and improve the performance of machine learning algorithms.
- **Feature Engineering**: Creation of new features based on existing data, such as time of day, day of the week, and historical traffic patterns, to enhance the predictive capabilities of the ML model.

3) Machine Learning Model Development: The supervised ML model is developed using the following approach:

- **Model Selection**: Choosing the best machine learning algorithms depending on the objectives of the optimization and the type of data. Decision trees, ensemble approaches, and linear regression are among the algorithms taken into consideration.
- **Model Training and Validation**: ML model training process includes a training dataset and the performance of the model is checked using another validation set by it. The methods to measure model performance and avoid overfitting are commonly in use.
- **Hyperparameter Tuning**: Optimization of model hyperparameters to enhance performance, using techniques such as grid search or random search.

C. Machine Learning Integration

1) ML Model Integration: The ML model is integrated into the AnyLogic simulation environment with the following steps:

- **Model Deployment**: The trained ML model is deployed within the simulation to predict optimal signal timings based on real-time traffic data.
- **Dynamic Adjustment**: In order to guarantee that traffic light phases are optimized based on actual traffic conditions, the model's predictions are utilized to dynamically modify signal timings.
- **Real-time Feedback**: The simulation environment offers operational reward to the machine learning model instantly, which allows it to keep refining predictions that come from the real-time data.

2) RL Agent Integration: The reinforcement learning (RL) agent is integrated to dynamically adjust traffic light timings:

- **RL Agent Configuration**: The RL agent is configured with a reward system based on traffic flow metrics, such as reduced wait times and improved vehicle throughput.
- **Learning Process**: The RL agent interacts with the simulation environment, adjusting signal timings and receiving rewards or penalties based on the observed impact on traffic flow.
- **Policy Optimization**: The RL agent learns and optimizes traffic light policies over time, improving its ability to manage traffic flow effectively.

V. Experimental Setup and Demonstration

A. Simulation Scenarios

The experimental setup involves testing the traffic light optimization system under various scenarios:

1) Baseline Scenario: In this scenario, the simulation runs with fixed signal timings:

- **Control Configuration**: Fixed timings are set based on typical traffic patterns observed in the historical data.
- **Performance Metrics Collection**: Key metrics such as average wait times, vehicle throughput, and congestion

levels are recorded for comparison with the optimized scenarios.
- **Analysis Objectives**: The baseline scenario serves as a control to assess the impact of optimized signal timings on traffic flow.

2) Optimized Scenario: In this scenario, the simulation runs with ML and RL-based optimized signal timings:

- **Optimized Timings Deployment**: Signal timings are dynamically adjusted based on predictions from the ML model and decisions made by the RL agent.
- **Performance Metrics Collection**: Metrics are collected during the optimized scenario to evaluate improvements in traffic flow and congestion reduction.
- **Comparison Objectives**: Performance metrics are compared to those from the baseline scenario to assess the effectiveness of the optimization approach.

3) Stress Testing: The simulation is subjected to high traffic volumes and random events:

- **High Traffic Volume Testing**: The system is tested under peak traffic conditions to evaluate its performance and robustness in managing heavy traffic loads.
- **Random Events Testing**: The simulation includes random events such as accidents or road closures to test the system's ability to adapt and maintain optimal traffic flow.
- **Robustness Evaluation**: Results are analyzed to assess the system's robustness and reliability under varying and challenging traffic conditions.

B. Data Collection and Analysis

1) Performance Metrics: Key performance metrics are collected and analyzed:

- **Average Wait Times**: Measurement of the average time vehicles spend waiting at traffic signals, providing insights into the effectiveness of signal timing adjustments.
- **Vehicle Throughput**: Measurement of the number of vehicles passing through the intersection per unit of time, indicating improvements in traffic flow.
- **Congestion Levels**: Analysis of congestion levels, including queue lengths and overall traffic density, to evaluate the impact of optimized signal timings.

2) Statistical Analysis: Statistical techniques are applied to analyze the results:

- **Hypothesis Testing**: Statistical tests are conducted to determine whether observed differences in performance metrics are statistically significant.
- **Confidence Intervals**: Confidence intervals are calculated to assess the reliability of the results and provide a measure of uncertainty around the performance improvements.
- **Data Visualization**: Visualization techniques such as charts and graphs are used to present the data and highlight key findings from the experiments.

VI. Results and Discussion

A. Performance Comparison

1) Baseline vs. Optimized: A detailed comparison of traffic flow metrics is provided:

- **Average Wait Times**: Analysis of reductions in average wait times achieved with optimized signal timings compared to fixed timings.
- **Vehicle Throughput**: Evaluation of improvements in vehicle throughput and the impact on overall traffic flow efficiency.
- **Congestion Reduction**: Examination of reductions in congestion levels and queue lengths resulting from the optimized signal timings.

TABLE I
AVERAGE WAIT TIMES BY SCENARIO (IN SECONDS)

Scenario	**Wait Time (Baseline)**
Peak Hours	75
Off-Peak Hours	45
Random Events	65
Overall Average	**61**

TABLE II
VEHICLE THROUGHPUT BY SCENARIO (VEHICLES/HOUR)

Scenario	**Throughput (Baseline)**
Peak Hours	800
Off-Peak Hours	600
Random Events	700
Overall Average	**700**

2) Impact of RL Agent: The contribution of the RL agent is evaluated:

- **Dynamic Adjustments**: Analysis of how the RL agent's dynamic adjustments to signal timings impact traffic flow and congestion management.
- **Learning Outcomes**: Assessment of the RL agent's learning process and its effectiveness in optimizing traffic signal control policies.
- **Performance Enhancements**: Evaluation of performance enhancements attributed to the RL agent's adaptive decision-making capabilities.

TABLE III
AVERAGE WAIT TIMES WITH OPTIMIZED MODEL (ML + RL)

Scenario	**Wait Time (Optimized)**
Peak Hours	40
Off-Peak Hours	30
Random Events	50
Overall Average	**40**

B. Scalability and Robustness

1) Scalability: The scalability of the optimized system is assessed:

- **Traffic Volume Variations**: Evaluation of how the system performs under varying traffic volumes, including both low and high traffic conditions.

TABLE IV
VEHICLE THROUGHPUT WITH OPTIMIZED MODEL (ML + RL)

Scenario	Throughput (Optimized)
Peak Hours	950
Off-Peak Hours	750
Random Events	800
Overall Average	**833**

- **Intersection Complexity**: Analysis of the system's effectiveness at different intersection configurations and complexities.
- **Adaptability to Growth**: Examination of the system's ability to adapt to increasing traffic demands and changes in urban traffic patterns.

2) Robustness: The robustness of the system is analyzed:

- **Handling Unexpected Events**: Evaluation of the system's performance in handling unexpected traffic events, such as accidents or road closures.
- **System Stability**: Assessment of the system's stability and reliability under diverse and challenging traffic conditions.
- **Long-term Performance**: Analysis of long-term performance and the system's ability to maintain optimal traffic management over extended periods.

VII. DISCUSSION

A. Behavior and Results

1) System Behavior:

- **Adaptive Performance**: The hybrid ML and RL system demonstrates significant adaptive behavior, effectively adjusting traffic light timings in response to real-time data and varying traffic conditions.
- **Learning and Optimization**: The RL agent exhibits a continuous learning process, optimizing traffic light policies based on real-time feedback and interaction with the simulation environment.
- **Enhanced Traffic Flow**: The system's adaptive performance results in improved traffic flow efficiency, with noticeable reductions in average wait times and congestion levels.

2) Verification and Validation:

- **Verification Process**: The accuracy and reliability of the system are verified through extensive testing and validation against predefined benchmarks and real-world data. Verification ensures that the system performs as expected and meets the desired objectives.
- **Validation Against Real Data**: The system's performance is validated against real-world traffic data to ensure that the simulation accurately reflects actual traffic conditions and provides meaningful insights.
- **Continuous Improvement**: Ongoing validation and refinement of the system contribute to its continuous improvement and ability to address evolving traffic management challenges.

VIII. CONCLUSION

A. Summary of Objectives and Findings

- **Achieved Objectives**: The project successfully achieved its objectives of optimizing traffic light timings using a hybrid ML and RL approach, resulting in significant improvements in traffic flow and congestion reduction.
- **Key Findings**: Key findings include reduced average wait times, increased vehicle throughput, and enhanced traffic flow efficiency. The combination of supervised ML for predictive modeling and RL for dynamic adjustments proved to be effective in managing traffic congestion.
- **System Benefits**: The optimized traffic management system offers benefits such as improved traffic flow, reduced congestion, and the ability to adapt to real-time traffic conditions.

B. Achievements and Limitations

- **Achievements**: The system's ability to optimize traffic light timings and improve traffic flow demonstrates the potential of integrating machine learning and reinforcement learning for traffic management.
- **Limitations**: Limitations include the reliance on historical data, potential challenges in scaling the system to larger or more complex intersections, and the need for ongoing refinement and validation.
- **Assumptions and Constraints**: The system's performance is influenced by the assumptions and constraints of the simulation environment, including the accuracy of the dataset and the stability of traffic patterns.

IX. FUTURE WORK

A. Research and Development

- **Extended Research**: Future research will explore the integration of additional machine learning techniques and data sources to further enhance traffic light optimization and address emerging traffic management challenges.
- **Real-World Testing**: Plans include conducting real-world tests to validate the system's performance in actual traffic scenarios and assess its applicability to diverse urban environments.
- **Scalability and Adaptability**: Future work will focus on improving the system's scalability and adaptability to accommodate different intersection configurations, traffic volumes, and urban settings.

B. Commercialization and Application

- **Commercial Potential**: The research has potential for commercialization, with opportunities to develop and deploy traffic management solutions for cities and transportation agencies.
- **Market Analysis**: A market analysis will be conducted to evaluate the demand for advanced traffic management systems and identify potential customers and partners.
- **Product Development**: Plans for product development will include creating user-friendly interfaces, integrating

with existing traffic management infrastructure, and ensuring ease of deployment and maintenance.

X. References

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XI. Appendix

A. Implementation Details

- **Code Snippets**: Detailed code snippets and implementation details for the ML and RL models, including data preprocessing, model training, and simulation integration.
- **Simulation Screenshots**: Screenshots of the AnyLogic simulation environment, including configuration settings, traffic light control panels, and performance metrics.
- **Dataset Description**: Detailed description of the external dataset, including data attributes, preprocessing steps, and feature engineering.

B. Additional Illustrations

- **Performance Graphs**: Graphs and charts illustrating the performance metrics, including average wait times, vehicle throughput, and congestion levels.
- **Experimental Results**: Tables and visualizations of the experimental results for baseline and optimized scenarios, including statistical analysis and comparisons.
- **Model Performance Metrics**: Evaluation metrics for the ML and RL models, including accuracy, precision, recall, and learning curves.