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PAPER

K-Fold Cross-Validation through Identification of the Opinion Classification Algorithm for the Satisfaction of University Students

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ABSTRACT

When using machine-learning techniques to determine algorithms or ranking models that identify student satisfaction, algorithms are often trained and tested on a single data set, leading to bias in their performance metrics. This article aims to identify the best algorithm to classify the satisfaction of university students applying the K-fold cross-validation technique, comparing the error rates of the performance metrics before and after its application. The method used began with the collection of student opinions on the teaching performance of the social network Twitter during an academic semester. Then, sentiment analysis was used for data processing, through which it was possible to categorize the opinions of the students into "satisfied" or "dissatisfied." The results showed that the algorithm with the lowest error rate in its performance metric was the support vector machine (SVM). In addition, it was identified that its classification probability reached an accuracy of 91.76%. It is concluded that SVM classification using K-fold cross-validation will contribute to determining which factors associated with the teacher's didactic strategies should be improved in each class session, since traditional surveying techniques have shortcomings.

KEYWORDS

satisfaction, university students, classification algorithm, cross-validation, sentiment analysis

1 INTRODUCTION

Machine learning, like other tools linked to artificial intelligence, is proving useful in different fields, such as industry, education, medicine and the economy, since it contributes to the generation of knowledge for decision-making [1–3]. Thus, in the last two decades, the application of machine learning in the educational field has grown significantly [4–6]; this is because its main purpose is to identify classification or prediction models, based on certain particular characteristics of students [7, 8].

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This allows early identification of aspects related to the educational process as a whole, contributing to improving the quality of academic service [9–11]. Among the multiple indicators that are linked to university educational quality is student satisfaction [12–14]. Being able to measure this is important, as it allows identifying which services of the educational system require action plans to improve it and obtain a competitive advantage in relation to other university institutions [15, 16]. Today, through machine-learning models, it is possible not only to identify student satisfaction, but also to predict and classify groups of students with common patterns [17–19]. However, applying machine learning entails taking into account four categories: supervised learning, unsupervised learning, semisupervised learning and reinforcement learning [20–22]. In relation to supervised learning, it is required that the data be labeled or structured as input and output data, establishing an association between these data, and generating regression or classification patterns [23–25].

Together with machine learning, it is possible to resort to text mining through social networks to identify the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of students regarding the services they receive from the university [26–28]. One of the fields of text mining, which allows us to predict student opinions, is sentiment analysis [29, 30]. Sentiment analysis, also called opinion mining, allows classifying a series of texts by identifying the positive or negative polarity of the opinions [31–33]; as such, the algorithms or models of machine learning allow assigning a category to the opinions of the students [34]. Opinion categorization is an integral part of natural language processing (NLP), which helps to extract relevant words and retrieve information [35–37]. For the collection of opinions related to student satisfaction, the use of social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, or WhatsApp is viable [38, 39]. Thus, by using text mining or opinion mining and NLP, it is possible to identify the perception of university student satisfaction [40, 41].

There are machine-learning algorithms that use sentiment analysis such as Naive Bayes, Logistic Regression, and SVM (support vector machine) for the classification of university student satisfaction [42–44]. These are evaluated through their performance metrics [45], these being accuracy, precision, F1 score, AUC-ROC (area under the curve–receiver operating characteristic), and recall [46–48]. By comparing these metrics, it is possible to identify the machine-learning algorithm or classification model [49]. The process of training and testing the algorithm usually relies on a single data set, so it is possible to generate bias in the performance metrics of the algorithm [50]; however, through cross-validation techniques, it is possible to train, validate, and test with multiple data sets or folds [51–53]. There are several techniques to perform cross-validation, these being K-fold cross-validation, stratified K-fold, or nested cross-validation [54, 55]. Of all the aforementioned techniques, K-fold validation is the most advantageous because it uses all the data to train and validate, obtaining more representative results a priori and with less bias or risk of error [56]. Thus, by applying the K-fold technique to determine student satisfaction, the identification of the algorithm's performance metrics is guaranteed with levels of precision and accuracy without bias [57].

This article has as its research question: What is the algorithm for classifying university student satisfaction that presents the best performance metric, after applying the K-fold cross-validation technique? The method that will be used will take as its starting point the collection of student opinions on teacher performance from the social network Twitter. These data will be collected during one academic semester, and subsequently sentiment analysis will be used for data processing through the

NLTK (natural language toolkit) and Vader (valence-aware dictionary and sentiment reasoner) libraries of Python, with which the opinions of the students will be categorized as satisfied and dissatisfied. Likewise, for the application of the K-fold cross validation, the Python software libraries will be used.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Machine learning has the purpose of getting computers to process large volumes of data, seeking to generate classification or prediction algorithms [58]. Based on the type of learning, these algorithms are classified as unsupervised, supervised, or reinforcement learning [59]. In unsupervised learning, the main task is to identify groups of unlabeled data with a common feature, called clusters [60], while, in supervised learning, the dataset under analysis is labeled as input data and output data, thus generating models or prediction algorithms [61]. Among the most common algorithms, we have the regression algorithm, the decision-tree algorithm, the SVM, and Naive Bayes [62]. These algorithms are chosen according to their performance indicators or metrics, these being precision, accuracy, sensitivity (recall), F1 score, and AUC [63]. Accuracy is the metric that helps to know how exact or close the result is to the true value, providing information about the possible errors that can be found in the classification [64]. Equation (1) shows the expression to determine the accuracy of the classification algorithm, where accuracy depends on the number of true positives (TP), true negatives (TN), false positives (FP) and false negatives (FN) [65].

$$
Accuracy = \frac{TP + TN}{TP + TN + FP + FN}
$$
 (1)

Likewise, sensitivity or recall represents the proportion of correctly classified positive cases [66]. Equation (2) shows the expression to determine sensitivity [67].

$$
Recall = \frac{TP}{TP + FN}
$$
 (2)

AUC represents the probability of correctly classifying a randomly chosen positive class rather than a randomly chosen negative one [66]. Equation (3) shows the expression to determine the area under the curve.

$$
AUC = 1 - specificity = \frac{FP}{TN + FP}
$$
 (3)

Another of the tools used in this study is NLP, whose purpose is to create computer systems that understand, process, and generate a natural language similar to that used by human beings [68]. It comprises a set of techniques and strategies that guarantee that systems interpret and process human language (spoken, symbolic, and written) [69]. Its application implies the use of the following steps: implementation of libraries that allow the extraction of text, tokenization, conversion of words to lowercase text, filtering of special characters, elimination of punctuation marks, verification of letter contents, elimination of spaces between words, correction of words, and change of word for its corresponding synonym according to the context [70]. Table 1 shows the list of studies in which machine-learning techniques, sentiment analysis, NLP, classification algorithms, and K-fold cross-validation have been used. For each research study reviewed, the title of the manuscript

is specified, as well as the results obtained. These results will be useful for the discussion section of the results found in the K-fold cross-validation study by identifying the opinion classification algorithm for classifying the satisfaction of university students.

Table 1. Previous studies

Cross-validation is an important sample-processing method for modern statistics and is widely used in machine-learning models [78, 79]. There are several cross-validation techniques, one of which is the K-fold cross-validation [80]. Figure 1 shows the cross-validation process with K equal to 10, which consists of the random division of a data set into 10 subgroups, or folds [81]. One of these folds is the test group, and the other remaining K-1 subgroups are called the training group. Training and validation are performed K times, using a different subgroup as the validation set in each iteration and the rest of K-1 as the training set [82].

Fig. 1. Steps to perform the K-fold technique

In each of the K iterations of this type of validation, an error calculation is performed. In this regard, in [83] it is indicated that the final result is obtained from the arithmetic mean of the K values of errors obtained, according to equation (4).

$$
E = \frac{1}{k} \sum_{k=1}^{k} E_i
$$
\n⁽⁴⁾

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data-collection stage

The method used has as its starting point the data-collection stage, which was made up of student opinions that were generated on the Twitter social network. A tweet was created weekly, which contained an open question addressed to the students in which they were asked: What do you think about the teacher's performance in the class session? Previously, an explanation was made to the students about the purpose of their opinions and what factors are linked with respect to the satisfaction of the teaching performance. In this way, fifteen tweets were generated

throughout the academic semester, resulting in collecting 254 responses or opinions from students. These opinions were grouped weekly and stored in a database with a CSV (comma-separated values) extension that could be read and processed by Python software.

3.2 Opinion-processing stage through NLP

The second stage consisted of the processing of opinions through the NLP, which was developed through the use of the NLTK and Vader libraries from Python. This stage, in turn, is made up of three sub-stages. The first sub-stage, called "data preprocessing," consisted of cleaning the texts written by the students, eliminating duplicate words and extra spaces between words, and converting all texts to lower case. The second sub-stage consisted of the "weighting of sentiment," that is, quantitative values between -1 and 1 were assigned to each opinion. The third sub-stage consisted of the "categorization of the feelings" contained in the opinions of the students as "dissatisfied" and "satisfied"; this was achieved using a vectorization technique such as TF-IDF (term frequency– inverse document frequency). That is, those opinions with a weight between -1 and 0, called opinions with a negative polarity, were categorized as dissatisfied, while those opinions with a weight between 0 and 1, called opinions with a positive polarity, were categorized as satisfied. It should be noted that the opinions whose weighting turned out to be zero were not considered in the study because they do not contribute to the increase in the percentage of satisfied or dissatisfied students.

3.3 Identification stage of the classification algorithm

The third stage consisted of the identification of the classification algorithm, and like the previous stages, it was supported by Python machine-learning libraries. The first sub-stage consisted of the "designation of data for training and testing," establishing 70% of the data collected for training and 30% for testing; This is because, generally, for the use of the K-fold cross-validation technique, data are used in the proportion of 70% and 30% or 80% and 20% [62]. The evaluation algorithms were the SVM, Logistic Regression, Naive Bayes, and Decision Tree; using of all of them, it was possible to identify their performance metrics (accuracy, F1 score, and AUC-ROC).

The second sub-stage consisted of the "identification of the performance metrics," but now applying the stratified type K-fold cross-validation technique with a value of K equal to 10; this is because the amount of data collected (254 opinions) was small. This validation was repeated five times for each algorithm evaluated. Finally, the third sub-stage consisted of the "comparison of the performance metrics and identification of the classification algorithm" of student satisfaction regarding teacher performance. Figure 2 shows the method used to identify the algorithm for classifying student satisfaction through K-fold cross-validation.

Fig. 2. Method used to identify the classification algorithm by K-fold cross-validation

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section considers the stages of the method defined for the identification of the university student satisfaction classification algorithm through K-fold crossvalidation. The first stage was data collection. Table 2 shows the number of tweets obtained per class week, in which it was possible to collect 288 tweets or opinions from the students. It should be noted that of the 288 opinions collected, 34 opinions obtained neutral polarity, so the tweets to be processed for the evaluation was reduced to 254.

Opinion Collection Week	Tweets with Positive Polarity	Tweets with Negative Polarity	Tweets with Neutral Polarity	Total Tweets Per Week
Week 1	26			
Week 2				22
Week 3	18			2.1
Week 4	16			18
Week 5	8			14
Week 6	15			

Table 2. Tweets collected by class week

(Continued)

In relation to the stage corresponding to the processing of opinions through sentiment analysis, Table 3 shows the categorization of the 254 opinions generated by students regarding teaching performance. It was found that 90.55% of opinions were categorized as satisfied, while 9.45% were categorized as dissatisfied.

Table 3. Categorization of opinions

In order to predict the classification as "satisfied" or "dissatisfied" of the subsequent opinions on student satisfaction generated in other academic semesters, different machine-learning models were evaluated to obtain their performance metrics and identify which of them predicted the classification with greater precision. In this research, the Support Vector Machine, Logistic Regression, Naive Bayes and Decision Tree models were trained and tested. Figure 3 shows the results of the precision and the F1 score as performance metrics of the classification algorithm. At first glance, it could be assumed that the algorithm that shows the best performance metric is the Decision Tree algorithm; however, these results were obtained with a single training dataset and a single test dataset, distributed in a proportion of 70% and 30%, respectively. Another aspect to highlight is the low values of the F1 score metric, which shows that there is an imbalance in the data collected.

Fig. 3. Performance metrics identified before the cross-validation technique

When identifying high values of the accuracy metric and low values of the F1-score metric, it is necessary to validate the results obtained through techniques such as K-fold cross-validation. For purposes of applying cross-validation in this research, a value of K equal to 10 was used, with five cases of validation for each iteration of K; this was to achieve greater precision in the results of performance metrics. Bravo et al. [64] point out that by using a K-fold cross-validation with a value of K equal to 10, it is possible to compensate for the effects of bias in the training data set. Table 4 shows the results of the K-fold cross-validation applied to the SVM algorithm, which shows the results of the accuracy of the algorithm. It can be seen that this value changes for different samples or training data (fold), as well as for each validation case. To describe the result obtained after the validation technique, the average value of all the folds in all the cases analyzed was obtained, resulting in an average value of accuracy equal to 0.9176.

Table 5 shows the results of the cross-validation for the Logistic Regression algorithm. The average value of the accuracy reaches a result identical to that of the SVM algorithm.

Classification Algorithm: Logistic Regression	First Case	Second Case	Third Case	Fourth Case	Fifth Case
$1-fold$	0.9412	0.8235	0.9412	0.9412	0.8824
2-fold	0.8824	0.8824	0.9412	0.8824	0.8824
3-fold	1.0000	0.9412	0.8824	1.0000	0.9412
4-fold	1.0000	0.8824	1.0000	0.8824	0.8824
5-fold	0.9412	0.9411	0.9412	0.9412	1.0000
6-fold	0.7647	0.8824	0.8824	0.9412	0.9412
7-fold	0.9412	1.0000	1.0000	0.9412	0.9412
8-fold	0.8824	0.9412	0.8824	0.8824	0.8235
$9-fold$	0.9412	1.0000	0.9412	0.8235	0.9412
$10-fold$	0.8824	0.8824	0.8824	0.9412	0.9412

Table 5. Results of the cross-validation of the logistic regression algorithm

Table 6 shows the results of the K-fold cross-validation, for the Decision Tree algorithm. The accuracy metric of the algorithm oscillates from a minimum value of 07059 to a maximum value of 1; the average value of said metric is equal to 0.8929.

Classification Algorithm: Decision Tree	First Case	Second Case	Third Case	Fourth Case	Fifth Case
$1-fold$	0.9412	0.8235	0.9412	0.9412	0.8824
$2-fold$	0.8235	0.8235	0.8824	0.8235	0.8824
$3-fold$	0.9412	0.8235	0.8235	1.0000	0.8824
$4-fold$	0.9412	0.8824	1.0000	0.8824	0.7647
5-fold	0.9412	0.9412	0.8824	0.9412	0.7059
6-fold	0.8235	0.9412	0.9412	0.8235	0.9412
7-fold	0.9412	1.0000	0.8235	0.8824	0.9412
8-fold	0.8824	0.8824	0.8824	0.8824	0.8235
$9-fold$	0.9412	1.0000	0.8235	0.8824	0.8824
$10-fold$	0.8824	0.9412	0.9412	0.9412	0.8824

Table 6. Results of the cross-validation of the decision tree algorithm

The fourth algorithm to which the K-fold cross-validation was applied was Naive Bayes. T average value of the accuracy metric is 0.8906. Table 7 shows the results of the validation for each fold and for the five repetitions.

Classification Algorithm: Naive Bayes	First Case	Second Case	Third Case	Fourth Case	Fifth Case
$1-fold$	0.9412	0.8235	0.9412	0.9412	0.8235
$2-fold$	0.7647	0.8824	0.8235	0.8235	0.8824
3-fold	0.9412	0.9412	0.9412	1.0000	0.9412
$4-fold$	1.0000	0.8235	1.0000	0.8824	0.8235
5-fold	0.9412	0.9412	0.9412	0.9412	0.9412
6-fold	0.7647	0.7647	0.7059	0.8824	0.9412
7-fold	0.8824	1.0000	0.8235	0.9412	0.9412
8-fold	0.9412	0.8824	0.8824	0.8824	0.8235
9-fold	0.8824	0.9412	0.8824	0.7647	0.8824
$10-fold$	0.8824	0.8824	0.8824	0.8824	0.9412

Table 7. Results of the cross-validation of the Naive Bayes algorithm

Figure 4 shows the results obtained after applying the K-fold cross-validation. In shows that the algorithms with the best accuracy in predicting the classification of student satisfaction are the SVM algorithm and Logistic Regression, both with accuracy values equal to 0.9176, higher than those achieved by the other two algorithms.

Fig. 4. Results of the accuracy metric after applying K-fold cross-validation

In order to carry out a more exhaustive analysis regarding the performance metrics of the classification algorithms and to be able to identify the one that best performs the classification, the AUC-ROC metric was determined. Its value represents the sensitivity of the algorithm; that is, when the AUC-ROC is approximately 0.5, the model does not have the capacity to discriminate between a satisfied and dissatisfied class, and when the AUC-ROC value is close to 0, the algorithm classifies the satisfied class as an

unsatisfied class and vice versa. Therefore, to establish that the algorithm has optimal sensitivity, it must be close to 1. Sucapuca [65] points out that in order to compare the models in a general way, an ROC curve is prepared, which represents the result of the sensitivity indicators; however, the ROC curve is a graphic representation, so in order to be compared, it is necessary to calculate the area that each represents, which is called AUC. Figure 5 shows the representation of the ROC curves for the different classification algorithms analyzed, obtained from the use of machine-learning libraries of the Python software. Figure 5(a) corresponds to the ROC curve of the Logistic Regression algorithm, in which the sensitivity value represented by the AUC value turned out to be, on average for the 10 folds of the cross-validation, equal to 0.83. In Figure 5(b) the corresponding value using SVM algorithm was 0.84, in Figure 5(c), the corresponding value for the Decision Tree algorithm was 0.69, and in Figure 5(d), the corresponding value for the Naïve Bayes algorithm was 0.60.

Fig. 5. ROC curves for the **(a)** Logistic Regression, **(b)** SVM, **(c)** Decision Tree, and **(d)** Naïve Bayes

Figure 6 shows the comparative results of the accuracy metric before and after the application of cross-validation. In the case of the Logistic Regression algorithm, before the application it had an accuracy of 0.9588, and after the application it reached a value of 0.9176. In the case of the SVM algorithm, before the application it had a value of 0.9176, and after the application it maintained the same value. In the case of the Decision Tree algorithm, before the application it had a value of 1, and after the application it reached a value of 0.8929. In the case of the Naive Bayes algorithm, before the application it had an accuracy of 0.9882, and after the application of the cross-validation it reached a value of 0.8926. Of all these results, the only algorithm that showed no bias in the performance metric "accuracy" was the SVM algorithm.

Fig. 6. Comparison of the accuracy before and after the application of the K-fold cross-validation

According to the results of both the accuracy metric and the sensitivity metric, of the four algorithms analyzed, the classification algorithms with the best performance were the SVM and Logistic Regression. In general, both algorithms had similar performance. In the case of the SVM algorithm, it predicted the classification with an accuracy of 91.76%, while the proportion of true positives that were correctly predicted reached 84%. Pacol and Palaoag [61] were able to determine that the SVM algorithm reached an accuracy value of 0.98. However, they did not use the cross-validation technique, and, as evidenced in this research, high values of the performance metrics are not a sign that the algorithm will really make a correct prediction of the classification. This is due to over-fitting when using a single data set for training or due to class imbalance in the collected data. This leads to the presence of bias in the results, which makes it necessary to use cross-assessment. Rajan and Mishra [62] concluded that when analyzing the classification algorithm using the K-Fold cross-validation technique, they were able to determine that the classification algorithm with the best accuracy turned out to be the SVM algorithm, reaching a value of 93.41%. This supports what has been demonstrated in this research because it is necessary to apply cross-validation techniques to achieve greater precision with respect to the performance metrics of the algorithm. Giving further support to the results obtained in this research, Kurnia [72] used K-fold cross-validation to identify the classification algorithm with the best performance and determined that the SVM

algorithm reached an accuracy of 78.99%, evidencing that the classification matrices performance varied in relation to the training and testing data sets.

5 CONCLUSION

From the results obtained, it was determined that, by applying the technique of sentiment analysis and automatic learning with the purpose of identifying the algorithm that classifies the opinions of the students with the best performance, the performance metrics of all the algorithms evaluated experienced significant changes when submitting them to a K-fold cross-validation procedure. This is because the classification algorithm, when the cross-validation technique is not applied, is trained and tested with only a single dataset, generating bias in its performance metrics. In addition, when comparing which algorithm shows a higher performance after applying cross-validation, it was determined that the SVM algorithm reached a level of precision of 91.76% and sensitivity (AUC-ROC) of 84%. This means that the SVM algorithm predicts the ranking of student opinions between the satisfied and dissatisfied classes with a high level of accuracy. In other words, this algorithm is sensitive to discriminate both types of opinions. It is concluded that SVM classification using K-fold cross-validation will contribute to determining which factors associated with the teacher's didactic strategies should be improved in each class session, since traditional surveying techniques have shortcomings.

6 STUDY LIMITATIONS

The study presents as a limitation the lack of university regulations that make the continuous participation of students sustainable during all class sessions. Currently the regulations of the National Technological University of Lima Sur (UNTELS) in Peru indicate that a satisfaction survey can be administered only once in the academic semester in which the teaching performance, among other aspects, is evaluated. It also indicates that its application will be made after fifteen weeks of the start of classes. This current scenario means that students do not have a culture of permanent participation in the evaluation processes of the satisfaction of the academic service received. For this reason, when we carried out this investigation, only 254 opinions were obtained and only from students of the automatic process control course of the mechanical and electrical engineering professional career program. Future research could be carried out with a larger population made up of students from other professional schools.

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