

# Attribution across Cyber Attack Types: Network Intrusions and Information Operations

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## Abstract

As the stakes get higher, intelligence and law enforcement agencies are working together to find the people responsible. This takes a lot of hard work. Tools and methods for figuring out who did bad things on the Internet are still in their early stages. Most of the time, people or groups are linked to attack activities through technical measurements, the origin of malicious code, and non-technical assessments of attack and attacker characteristics. Most of the time, figuring out who did an attack is a manual, time-consuming process that depends on both technical analysis and intelligence from the ground. As a result, this difficult and time-consuming process of attribution is mostly used for the worst cyber attacks and attacks on organisations with a lot of resources. Over time, we've gotten better at figuring out who did what. However, this is a double-edged sword: as attribution gets better, Internet privacy gets worse. This paper talks about attribution for two types of attacks that are at the centre of cyber conflict today: network intrusions and misinformation campaigns led by social bots. The paper talks about the current state of attribution for both types of attacks, makes suggestions for how it could be done better, and lays out directions for future research.

Cyber Attack, RFA, and Hyper parameter

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## Introduction

The Internet has become a big part of the social and economic life of the world. At the same time, cyber attacks are becoming more dangerous every year, making it a haven for crime and

war. Anonymity is a key building block of the Internet. It comes from the need to hide users' identities and separate their actions from who they are. This makes it possible for people to say what they think without worrying about getting in trouble. This can help protect people from being watched by authoritarian governments. Privacy advocates have gone to great lengths to protect users' anonymity by giving them services like remailers and encryption, which make it harder for people to find out who they are. Online criminals and terrorists are also protected by this kind of anonymity. People who commit crimes like money laundering, extortion, espionage, and theft can hide behind a mask of anonymity. Actors in cyber warfare also use the anonymity of the Internet to spy, probe, and attack without drawing attention to themselves or being found out.

We talk about two types of cyber threats that are common right now: network intrusions and information operations that use social media (propagation of false narratives to manipulate opinion or behavior). We also talk about recent improvements in analysing and figuring out who was behind these incidents. We also make a plan for future research and ways to stop the cyber weapons race from getting worse through better attribution techniques.

1.1 Attribution is the key to legal proceedings because, without it, there are far fewer ways to hold people or countries accountable. Attributing cyber attacks is what gives a nation-state the right to fight back. But blaming cyber attacks on foreign governments in public is hard to do and can have serious legal and political consequences in some cases. Due to these complexities, it may not be necessary to know who did what in order to get even. Putting the blame for a cyber attack on a foreign government is often a calculated political move. Since the technical waters of attribution in cybercrime are always murky, seeking attribution is a political act, and any retaliation is less likely to be justified or seen in relation to the act itself. In fact, the U.S. government seems to be changing its mind about who should be blamed in public. In addition to blaming Iran and North Korea for attacks, the U.S. government has been more willing to blame Russia and the RIS for attacks (Russian Intelligence Services).

1.2 In a 2017 Joint Analytic Report (JAR), the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Bureau of Investigation said, "Previous JARs have not linked malicious cyber activity to specific countries or threat actors. But technical signs from the U.S. Intelligence Community,

DHS, FBI, the private sector, and other groups back up the idea that these activities are linked to RIS.

Legal rules for figuring out who did what don't take into account the complicated relationships between state and non-state actors or the fact that state actors often hide behind the actions of non-state actors to make it look like they didn't do it. Some people say that the only way to figure out who did what is to take a holistic and multidisciplinary approach.

1.2 Cyber attacks: Network intrusion and information operations are the two main types of cyber attacks.

Network intrusion is when someone breaks into a network illegally and in secret, usually for bad reasons like espionage, making things worse, or making money. There are different kinds of these.

- The first type of intrusion is used during nation-state wars, which are often accompanied by physical warfare. Its goal is to weaken the morale of the enemy country and overthrow its government by stopping citizens from communicating and spreading false information.

- 

For information gathering and espionage, the second type of intrusion usually involves passive reconnaissance and probing of military, government, and private networks. This is done both to look for useful information and to find weaknesses in the networks and control systems, such as Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems.

The main reason for these kinds of activities is strategic. Getting this kind of information gives you technological know-how that can be used in business and the military in the future, lets you keep track of what a specific person is doing, and shows you where to attack if an enemy is hostile.

- The third kind of hacking tries to get into cyber-physical systems that depend more and more on information and communication systems. The goal of these kinds of attacks is to shut down cyber-physical systems like programmable logical controllers and SCADA systems, which make it possible for ATMs, power grids, and sewage treatment plants to work.

Information operations are actions taken by organised actors (governments or non-state actors) on social media and other Web platforms to change how people feel about politics at home or abroad, usually to achieve a strategic and/or geopolitical goal.

People all over the world use social media, and while it can be a good way to meet new people and share information, it also comes with some risks. For example, it makes it easy for almost anyone to share content that isn't likely to be checked for accuracy. This makes it a high-risk way for false information to spread.

People can use social bots to do bad things in a number of different ways. These bots are used to control social media services (SMS) by making content, sharing posts, and even commenting on posts made by real people.

1.3 Motivation: The goal of this study is to find out how machine learning algorithms can help better attribute cyber warfare and how combining these models can make them work better than they do now, since there isn't a single paper that talks about how cyber attacks are attributed in this way. Lastly, it's important to know and understand how these models can be used to make predictions that are different from one another.

1.4 The main problem and challenge is attribution in cyber warfare and spoofing of data. For example, a fake address of origin can be used in packets to hide the real IP-address, which makes the problem of identification even harder.

1.5 The goal of this paper is to explain the problem of figuring out who did surveillance, data theft, espionage, and misinformation campaigns as part of cyber warfare.

1.6 Scope: The goal of this work is to make it easier to know who did what on the internet and to protect people's privacy.

1.7 How to Use:

- Communication: In the world we live in now, we can send and receive any message through e-mail, and we don't have to use postage stamps.
- Social networking: These apps are very popular with teens and young adults. It could one day take the place of physical networking.
- Opportunities: Social media can be used for more than just making friends. We can get different job offers and choose the one we want.

3: Proposed System: In this paper, we use the Network Intrusion and Fake News datasets to train a machine learning algorithm called Random Forest. This trained model can be used to predict whether a network packet or social media news is a fake/attack or not.

3.1 Algorithm:

### 3.1.1 algorithm for the random forest:

Random forests, also called random decision forests, are a type of ensemble learning method that can be used for classification, regression, and other tasks. It works by building a lot of decision trees at training time. For classification tasks, the random forest gives the class chosen by the most trees as the answer.

This model is based on three random ideas: picking training data at random when making trees, picking some subsets of features when splitting nodes, and only looking at a subset of all features when splitting each node in each simple decision tree. In a random forest, each tree learns from a random sample of the data points when it is being trained.

- It is a classifier that has a number of decision trees on different subsets of the given dataset and takes the average to improve the predictive accuracy of that dataset.
- The more trees there are in the forest, the better the accuracy and the less likely it is that the model will be too good.

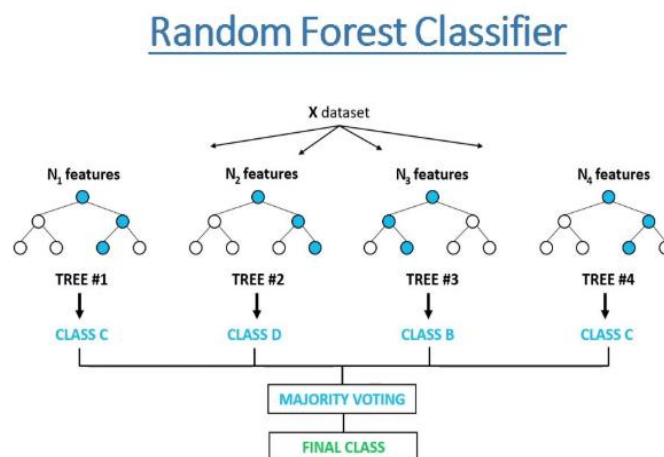


Fig.1. random forest classifier

### Hyperparameters of Random Forest:

- Firstly, there is the **n estimators** hyperparameter, which is just the number of trees the algorithm builds before taking the maximum voting or taking the averages of predictions. In general, a higher number of trees increases the performance and makes the predictions more stable, but it also slows down the computation.
- Another important hyperparameter is **max features**, which is the maximum number of features random forest considers to split a node. Sklearn provides several options, all described in the documentation.

- The last important hyperparameter is **min\_sample\_leaf**. This determines the minimum number of leafs required to split an internal node.

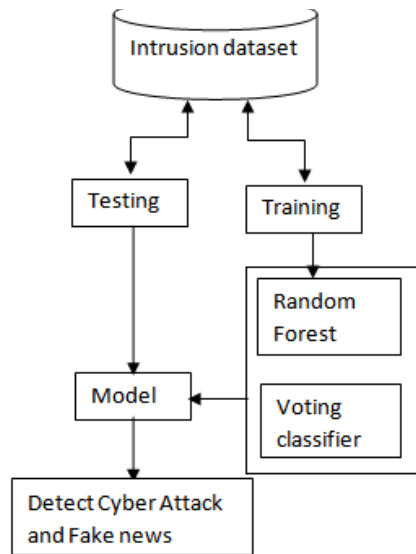


Fig.2

**3.4 Algorithm and Process design:**

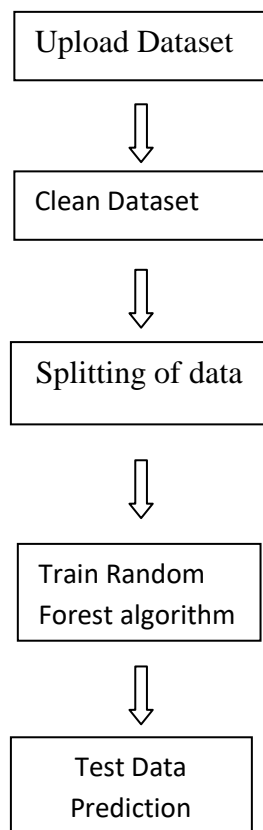


Fig.3. Process Design

**Modules:**

**Load Dataset:** We will load datasets into applications using this module.

**Clean Dataset:** Every dataset has missing and non-numeric data, and machine learning algorithms can only work with numeric data. To clean data, we need to get rid of missing values and change non-numeric data to numbers. **Split dataset into train and test:** split dataset into 80% training and 20% testing. Train machine learning algorithm on 80% data, then apply trained model to 20% data for prediction. Compare predicted values with original data to see how accurate algorithm prediction is.

**Train the Random Forest model:** In this module, we'll use the RF algorithm to feed train data into the model. **Test data prediction:** With this module, we will use test data on a trained model to predict if the test data is NORMAL or if it contains an attack or fake news.

**4 Methods Used and Results: 4.1 Concerning the data:**

In this project, we use a "intrusion dataset" and a "fake news dataset." The dataset is an important part of building IDS models based on machine learning. This dataset gives a wide range of simulated intrusions into a military network. By imitating a typical US Air Force LAN, it made a place where raw TCP/IP dump data for a network could be collected. The LAN was set up to look like a real place and attacked multiple times. A connection is a series of TCP packets that start and end at a certain time and allow data to flow from an IP address of origin to an IP address of destination using a well-defined protocol. Also, each connection is marked as either normal or an attack, and there is only one type of attack for each connection. About 100 bytes are used for each connection record.

Normal and attack data are used to get 41 quantitative and qualitative features for each TCP/IP connection. There are 3 qualitative features and 38 quantitative features.

There are two groups in the class variable:

- Normal • Anomalous

The first step is to get traffic from the internet as either a packet or a flow. After that, the traffic is put together into a certain type of data that includes labelling and other network-related features.

**Dataset on Fake News:**

There are two kinds of articles in the dataset: fake News and real News. This set of data was gathered from real-world sources. For example, the truthful articles were found by crawling Reuters.com (News website). As for the fake news stories, they came from a variety of places. The

fake news stories came from websites that Politifact, a fact-checking group in the United States, and Wikipedia said were not reliable. The dataset has different kinds of articles about different topics, but most of the articles are about politics and World news. There are two CSV files that make up the dataset. More than 12,600 articles from reuters.com are in the first file, which is called "True.csv." The second file, called "Fake.csv," has more than 12,600 fake news articles from different sources. Each article has a title, text, type, and the date it was published. To match the fake news data that Kaggle.com collected. The data that was collected was cleaned up and put to use, but the fake news kept its punctuation and spelling mistakes.

Measures of Performance:

In this graph, the x-axis shows the type of protocol, and the y-axis shows how many packets of that protocol type there are. In this graph, the x-axis shows the true class and the y-axis shows the predicted class. This is a confusion matrix for predicting attacks and normal behaviour.

Confusion Matrix is a useful machine learning method that lets you measure Recall, Precision, Accuracy, and the AUC-ROC curve.

For this, values are calculated based on: • True positive (TP) = number of events for which the correct answer was given.

- False negative (FN): The number of events that were wrongly predicted and did not happen.
- False-positive (FP) = the number of wrongly predicted events.
- True negative (TN): The number of events that could have happened but didn't.

Precision is the number of correct positive predictions out of the total number of positive predictions.

$$\text{Accuracy} = \frac{TP}{TP + FP}$$

Remember that it is the number of positive observations that can be predicted correctly out of all the observations in the original data.

$$\text{Recall} = \frac{TP}{TP + FN}$$

F1-score: It is the average of Precision and Recall with a weighted average. So, both false positives and false negatives are taken into account in this score. It is not as easy to understand as accuracy, but F Measure is usually more useful than accuracy, especially if you have a rough idea of how the class is distributed. The best way for accuracy to work is if both false positives and false negatives cost the same. If the prices for Precision and Recall are different, it's best to look at both.

$$\text{F1 Score} = \frac{2(\text{Precision Recall})}{\text{Precision} + \text{Recall}}$$



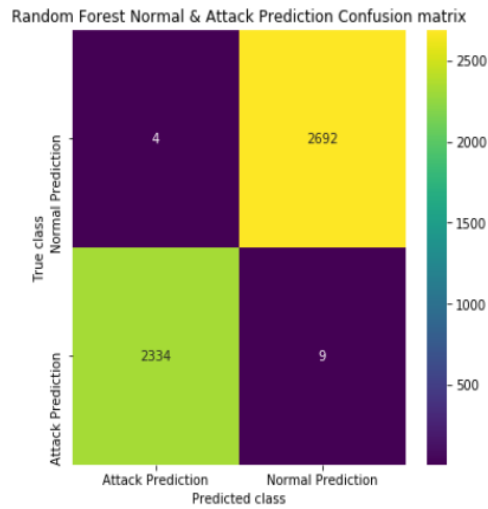


Fig.4

**4.3 Outcome:**

In propose paper we are training machine learning algorithm called Random Forest with Network Intrusion and FAKE NEWS dataset and this trained model can be used to predict network packet or social media news as fake/attack or genuine.

In below figure we are loading require python packages and then reading and displaying dataset values

```

In [10]: #Loading python packages
import pandas as pd
import numpy as np
from sklearn.preprocessing import LabelEncoder
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
import seaborn as sns
from sklearn.preprocessing import normalize
from sklearn.ensemble import RandomForestClassifier
from sklearn.metrics import precision_score
from sklearn.metrics import recall_score
from sklearn.metrics import f1_score
from sklearn.metrics import accuracy_score
from sklearn.model_selection import train_test_split

In [11]: #head cyber attack dataset
dataset = pd.read_csv("CyberAttackDataset/Train_data.csv")
print(dataset.head())
label = dataset.groupby('class').size()
label.plot(kind="bar")
plt.title("Normal & Attack Cyber Traffic Graph")
plt.show()

duration protocol_type service flag src_bytes dst_bytes land \
0 0 tcp ftp_data SF 491 0 0
1 0 udp other SF 146 0 0
2 0 tcp private S0 0 0 0
3 0 tcp http SF 232 8153 0
    
```

Fig.5

In below figure we are displaying total number of NORMAL and ATTACK packets found in dataset

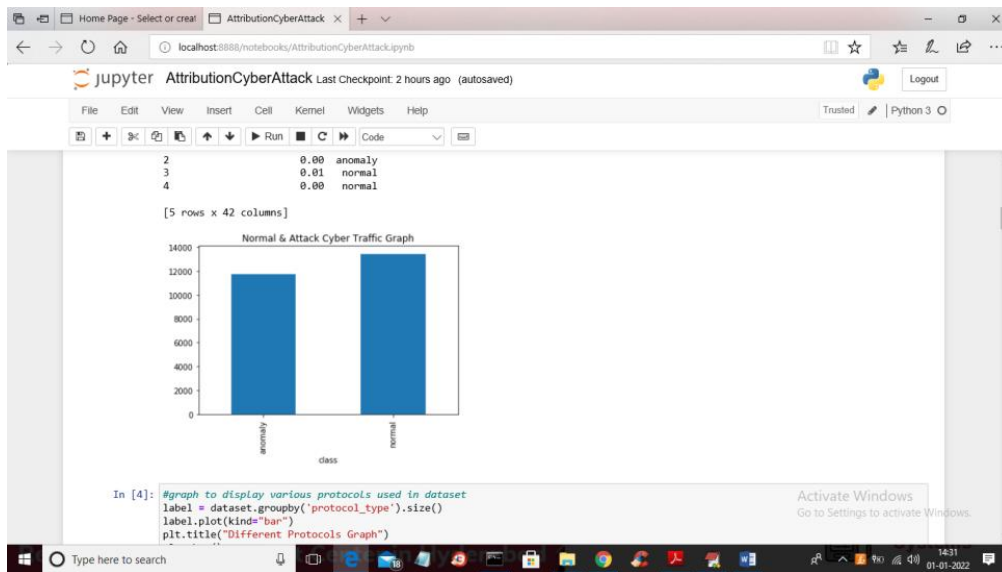


Fig.6

In above graph X-axis represents type of packet and y-axis represents number of records of that type. In below figure I am displaying graph for different types of protocols found in dataset

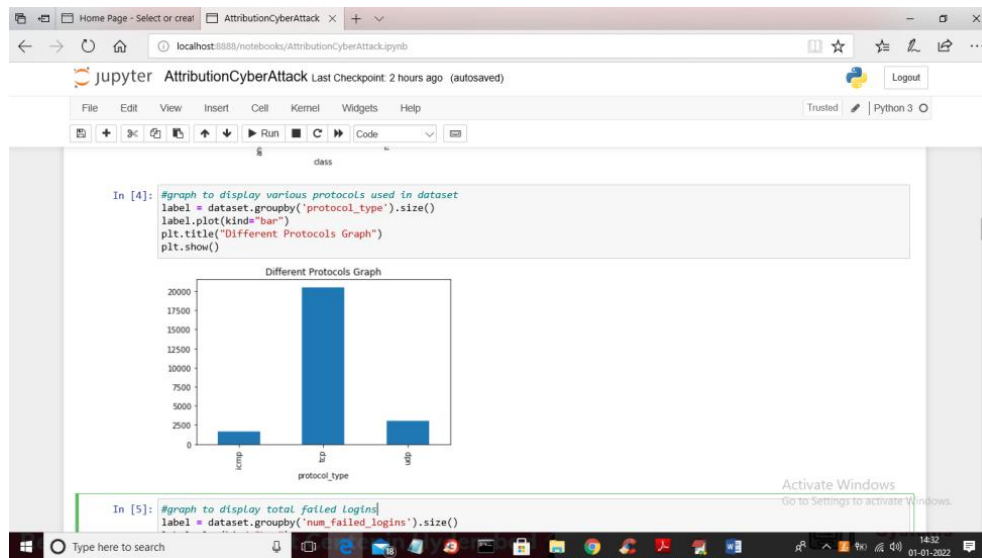


Fig.7

In above graph x-axis represents protocol type and y-axis represents total packets of that protocol type. In below figure we are displaying graph for failed login

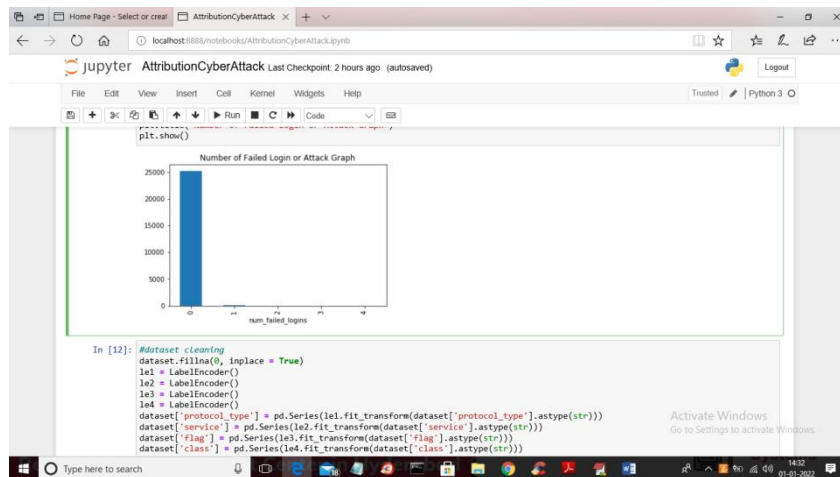


Fig.8

In below figure we are cleaning dataset and then splitting dataset into train and test

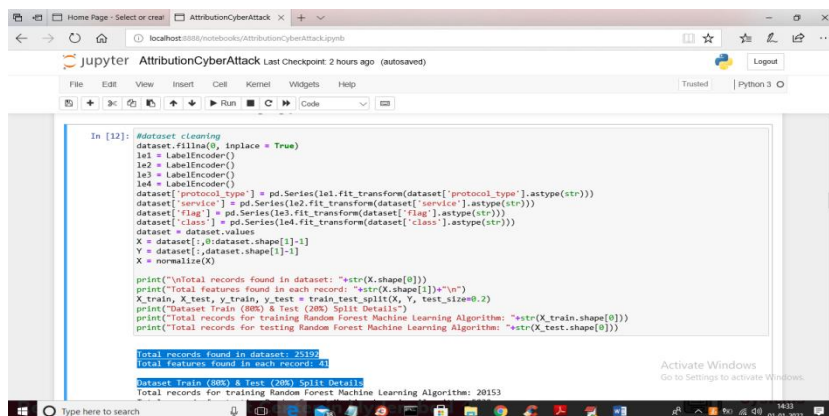


Fig.9

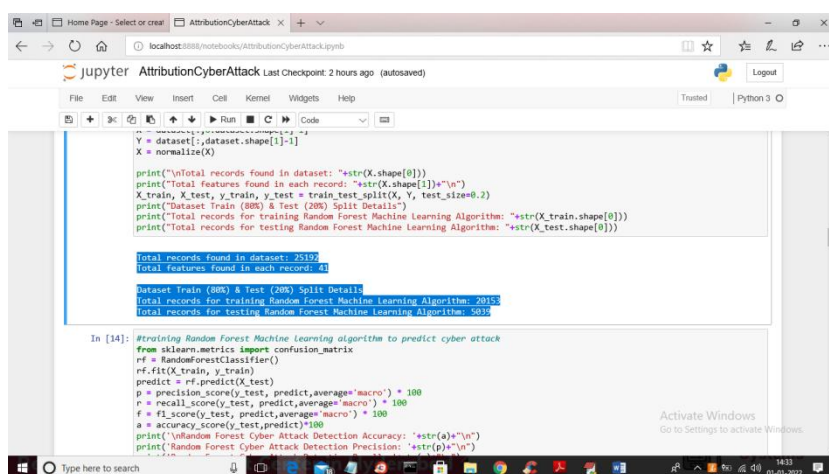


Fig.10

In above two figures we can see dataset size with train and test split and in below figure we are training Random Forest with training data

```

In [14]: #training Random Forest Machine Learning algorithm to predict cyber attack
from sklearn.metrics import confusion_matrix
rf = RandomForestClassifier()
rf.fit(X_train, y_train)
predict = rf.predict(X_test)
p = precision_score(y_test, predict, average='macro') * 100
r = recall_score(y_test, predict, average='macro') * 100
f = f1_score(y_test, predict, average='macro') * 100
a = accuracy_score(y_test, predict) * 100
print('\nRandom Forest Cyber Attack Detection Accuracy: {}'.format(a))
print('Random Forest Cyber Attack Detection Precision: {}'.format(p))
print('Random Forest Cyber Attack Detection Recall: {}'.format(r))
print('Random Forest Cyber Attack Detection FMeasure: {}'.format(f))

LABELS = ['Attack Prediction', 'Normal Prediction']
conf_matrix = confusion_matrix(y_test, predict)
plt.figure(figsize=(6, 6))
ax = sns.heatmap(conf_matrix, xticklabels=LABELS, yticklabels=LABELS, annot=True, cmap='viridis', fat='g');
ax.set_ylim([0,2])
plt.title("Random Forest Normal & Attack Prediction Confusion matrix")
plt.ylabel("True class")
plt.xlabel("Predicted class")
plt.show()

Random Forest Cyber Attack Detection Accuracy: 99.74201230402838
Random Forest Cyber Attack Detection Precision: 99.74785183955883
    
```

Fig.11

In above figure we are training data with random forest and we got accuracy of random forest as 99% and in below figure we can see confusion matrix of predicted and original data

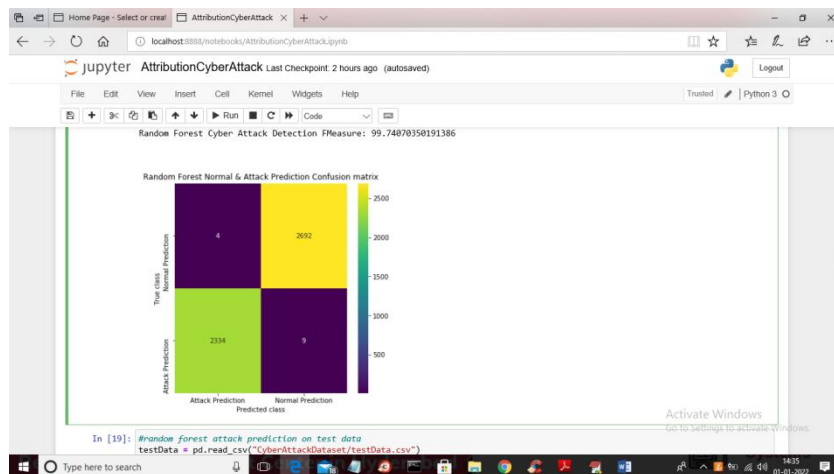


Fig.12

In above graph only 4 and 9 records are incorrectly predicted and in below figure we can see random forest prediction on new test data

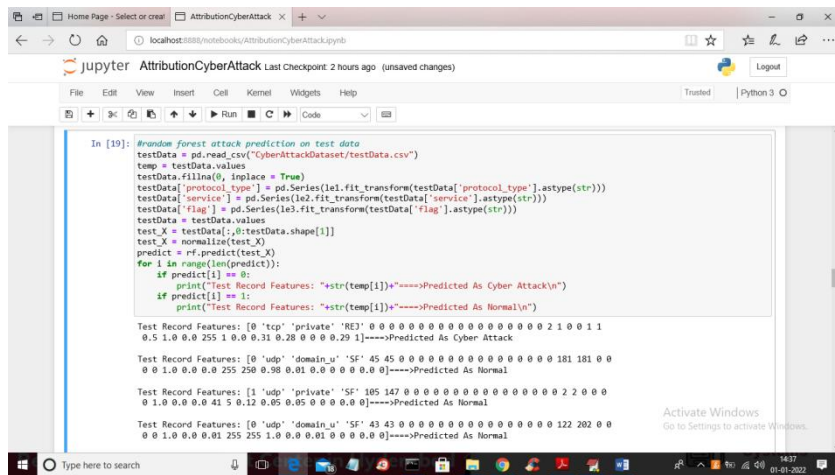


Fig.13

In above figure in output before => arrow symbol I am displaying test data and after arrow symbol I am displaying predicted results as CYBER ATTACK or NORMAL.

Now we are training random forest with FAKE NEWS dataset

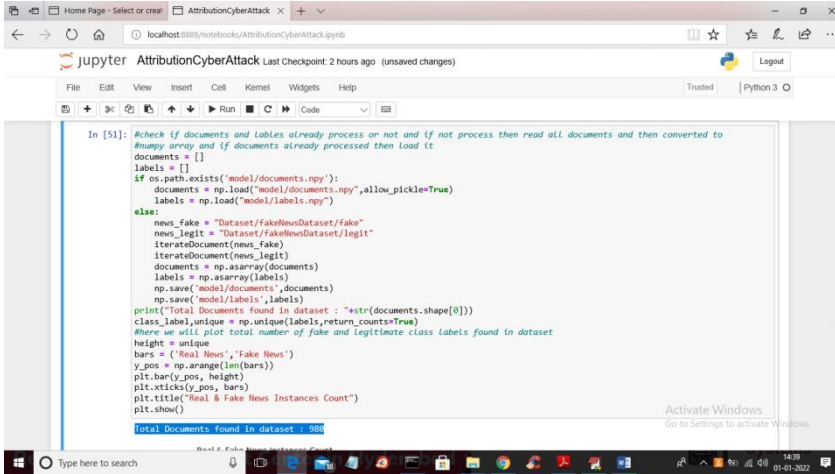


Fig.14

In above figure we are loading FAKE and LEGIT (real) news document and in blue colour text we can see total 980 news documents are loaded and in below figure we can see graph of fake and real news

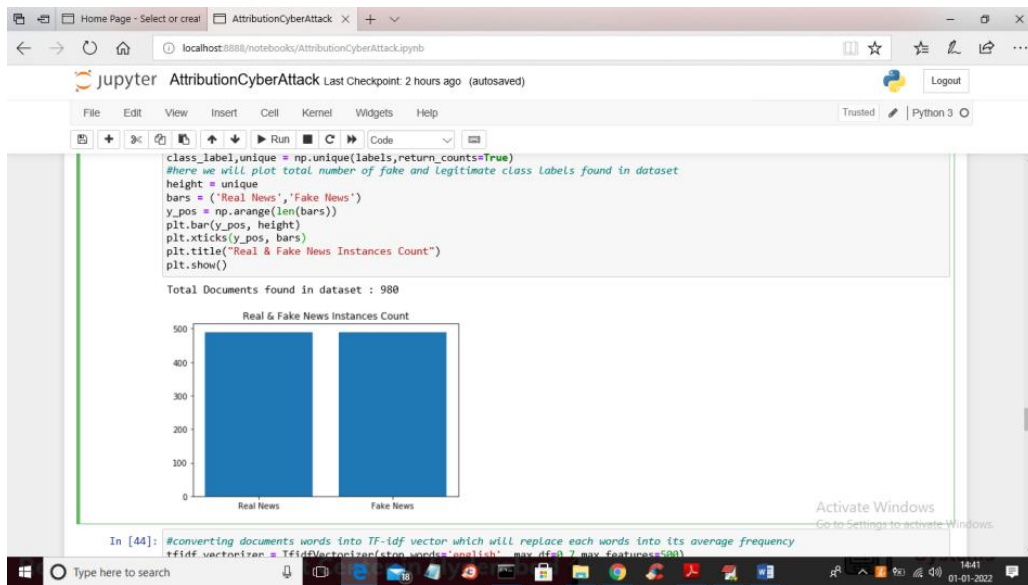


Fig.15

In below figure we are converting dataset into TF-IDF vector which will contains average frequency of each word and this vector will be trained with random forest

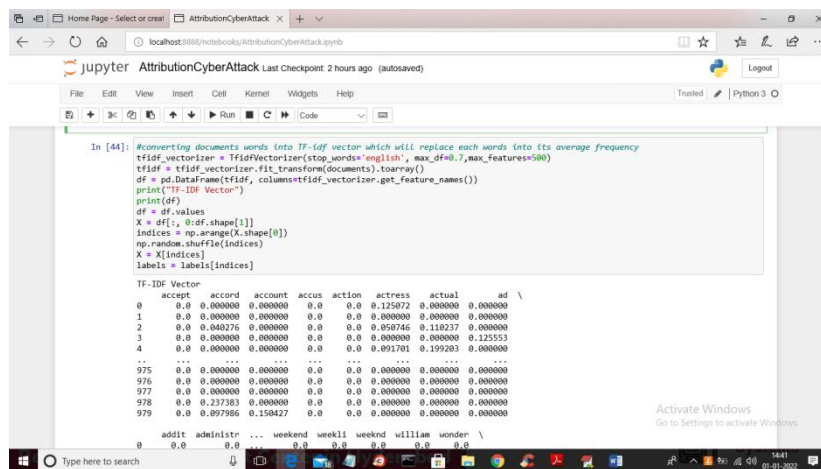


Fig.16

In above figure first line contains WORD name and below its we can find its frequency and if word not available then 0 will put. Now in below figure we are displaying WORD cloud to know which words are appearing most

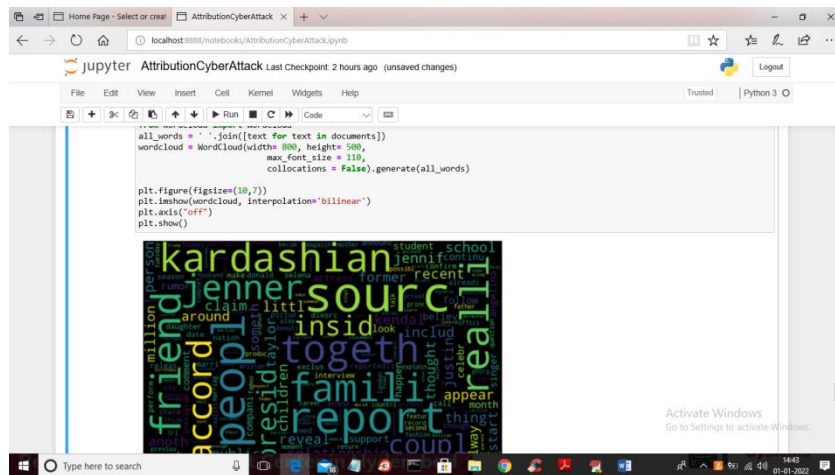


Fig.17

In above word cloud if word occur more time then its size will be huge else small. In below figure I am training frequency vector with random forest

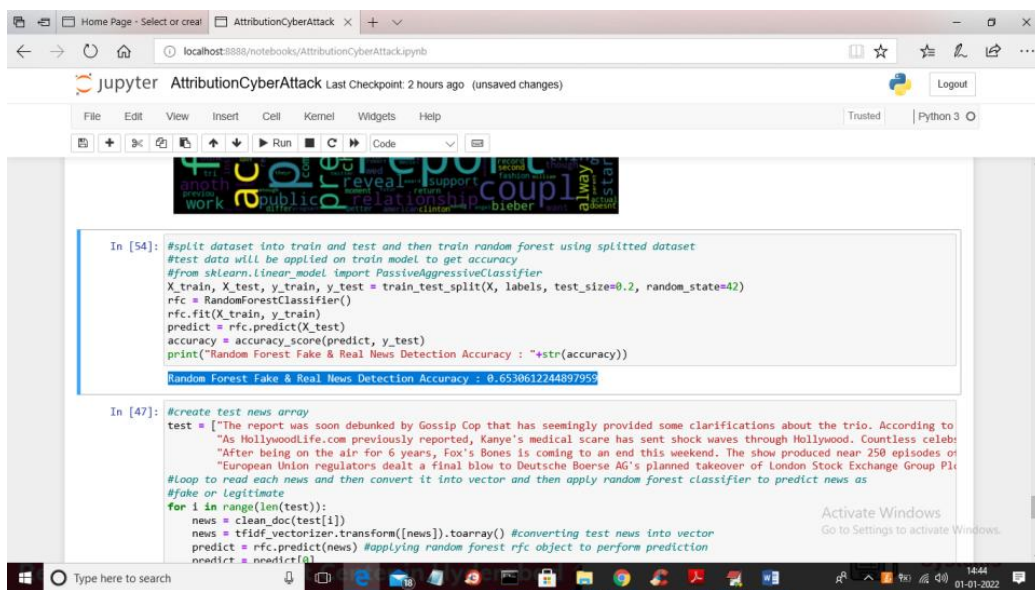


Fig.18

In above figure with random forest we got FAKE news detection accuracy as 65% and in below figure we are applying same trained model on new test data to predict it as FAKE or REAL. In below figure we are giving some sentences and then random forest will predict it as REAL or FAKE

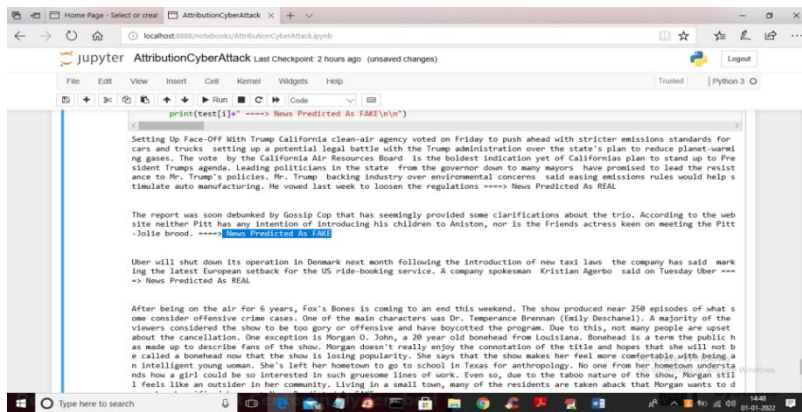


Fig.19

In above figure after sentence we are displaying predicted output as FAKE or REAL after ==> arrow symbol

### Extension Outcomes

In propose paper author has used Random Forest algorithm to detect cyber-attack from Intrusion dataset and then detecting FAKE news by using FAKE dataset. Author has used traditional Random Forest algorithm so as extension we have used combination of 3 different latest classifiers such as AdaBoost, XGBoost and Bagging classifier to make hybrid ensemble algorithm with the help of VotingClassifier.

Voting classifier takes multiple classifier algorithms as input and then train all those algorithms and then voted out or select algorithm with best accuracy. So by applying this algorithm on both Intrusion and Fake news giving better accuracy compare to Random Forest.

In below figure I am showing Random Forest Performance output

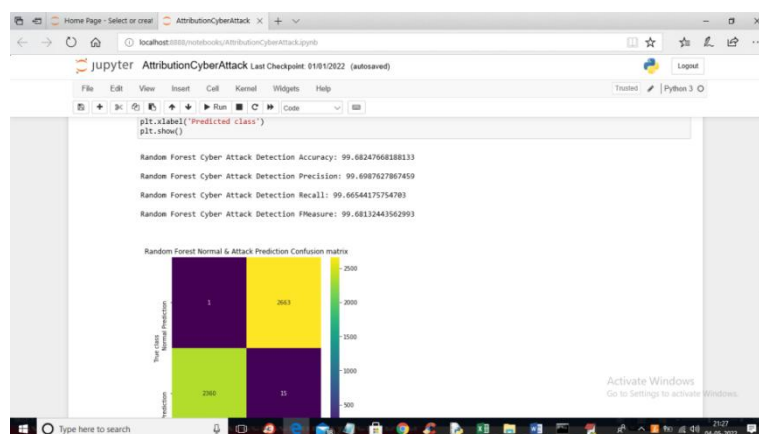


Fig.20



In above figure with Random Forest we got 99.68% accuracy and in confusion matrix graph we can see Random forest wrongly predict 15 and 1 records so total 16 records wrongly predicted. Below is the output of extension hybrid algorithm on same dataset

```

In [32]: bc = BaggingClassifier() #creating bagging classifier object and assigning its reference to bc variable
abc = AdaBoostClassifier() #creating ada boost object
xgb = XGBClassifier(n_estimators=120,max_depth=120,base_score=0.2) #xgb classifier
#now combining or ensembling all 3 classifiers as voting classifier which vote out and select classifier with best accuracy
vc = VotingClassifier(estimators=[('bc', bc), ('xgb', xgb), ('abc', abc)], voting='soft')
#now hybrid algorithm is training on train data
vc.fit(X_train, y_train)
#performing prediction on test data
predict = vc.predict(X_test)
p = precision_score(y_test, predict, average='macro') * 100
r = recall_score(y_test, predict, average='macro') * 100
f = f1_score(y_test, predict, average='macro') * 100
a = accuracy_score(y_test, predict) * 100
print('\nExtension Hybrid Ensemble Algorithm Cyber Attack Detection Accuracy: ' +str(a)+'\n')
print('Extension Hybrid Ensemble Algorithm Cyber Attack Detection Precision: ' +str(p)+'\n')
print('Extension Hybrid Ensemble Algorithm Cyber Attack Detection Recall: ' +str(r)+'\n')
print('Extension Hybrid Ensemble Algorithm Cyber Attack Detection FMeasure: ' +str(f)+'\n\n')

LABELS = ['Attack Prediction', 'Normal Prediction']
conf_matrix = confusion_matrix(y_test, predict)
plt.figure(figsize=(6, 4))
ax = sns.heatmap(conf_matrix, xticklabels = LABELS, yticklabels = LABELS, annot = True, cmap="viridis", fmt = "g");
ax.set_ylim([0,2])
plt.title('Extension Hybrid Ensemble Algorithm Normal & Attack Prediction Confusion matrix')
plt.xlabel('True class')
plt.ylabel('Predicted class')
plt.show()
    
```

Fig.21

In above figure you can see Extension hybrid algorithm which is combining 3 different classifiers and in above figure read light blue colour comments to know about extension algorithm and below is the output

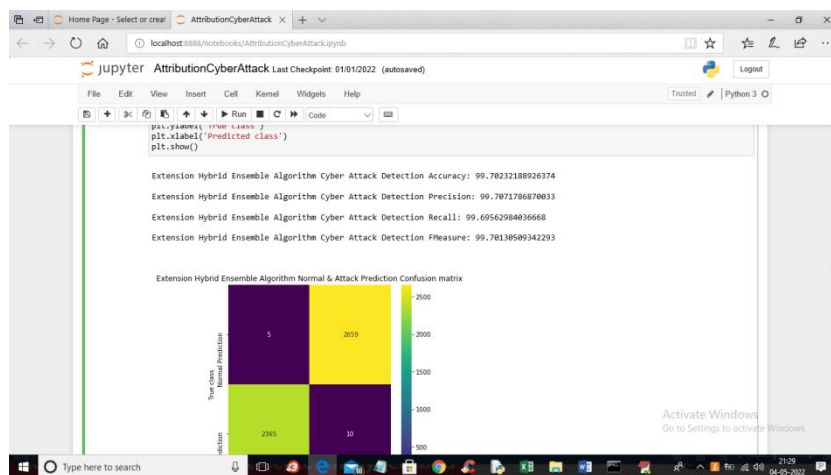


Fig.22

In above figure with extension algorithm we got 99.70% accuracy and Random Forest was 99.68% and in above confusion matrix extension algorithm wrongly predict 10 and 5 records so total 15

records wrongly predicted by extension algorithm and random forest wrong prediction was 16 so extension is better than Random Forest. Below is the Random Forest accuracy of Fake News dataset

```

#from sklearn.linear_model import LogisticRegressionClassifier
X_train, X_test, y_train, y_test = train_test_split(X, labels, test_size=0.2, random_state=42)
rfc = RandomForestClassifier()
rfc.fit(X_train, y_train)
predict = rfc.predict(X_test)
accuracy = accuracy_score(predict, y_test)
print("Random Forest Fake & Real News Detection Accuracy : "+str(accuracy))

Random Forest Fake & Real News Detection Accuracy : 0.6224489795918368

In [50]: bc = BaggingClassifier() #creating bagging classifier object and assigning its reference to bc variable
abc = AdaBoostClassifier() #creating ada boost object
xgb = XGBClassifier(n_estimators=40,max_depth=3) #xgb classifier
#now combining or ensembling all 3 classifiers as voting classifier which vote out and select classifier with best accuracy
vc = VotingClassifier(estimators=[('bc', bc), ('xgb', xgb), ('abc', abc)], voting='soft')
#now hybrid algorithm is training on train data
vc.fit(X_train, y_train)
#performing prediction on test data
predict = vc.predict(X_test)
a = accuracy_score(y_test, predict)
print("\nExtension Hybrid Ensemble Algorithm Fake & Real News Detection Accuracy: "+str(a)+"\n")

Extension Hybrid Ensemble Algorithm Fake & Real News Detection Accuracy: 0.6518612244897959

In [50]: #create test news array
test = ["Setting Up Face-Off With Trump California clean-air agency voted on Friday to push ahead with stricter emissions standards. The report was soon debunked by gossip Cop that has seemingly provided some clarifications about the trio. According to Uber will shut down its operation in Bombay next month following the introduction of new test laws. The company has 49
  
```

Fig.23

In the figure above, Random Forest got 0.62 percent accuracy, and the extension algorithm got 0.65 percent accuracy, which you can see in blue text. So, the extension algorithm is more accurate than the proposed random algorithm for both intrusion data and fake news data.

## CONCLUSION

Cyber attacks are a big research problem that is important for the Internet's stability and continued existence. Even though the Internet has become an important part of the world's social and economic life, it is also becoming a place where fights are likely to happen. Nation states are using the Internet as a strategic way to make up for differences in their militaries. They prefer to use cyber attacks instead of physical attacks to show they don't like the policies of another country. Because of how anonymous the Internet is, countries can say they didn't do it. Without clear attribution, it's hard to find the culprits or use international law to hold them accountable. Recent changes have made it easier to figure out who did something on the Internet. This is done through a complicated and time-consuming process of forensics on different pieces of evidence, such as code provenance, network data, and ip/domain addresses. Intelligence agencies have gathered information about what hackers, organisations, and nation states have done online in the past. This helps them figure out where the malware came from. Also, possible bad actors can be identified with a fair amount of certainty by looking at their means, motives, and opportunities. More recently, social bots have

become a major threat to national stability. At the moment, social bots are found by analysing message statistics (like how often they post, how long it takes them to respond, etc.) and linguistics. Attribution, however, is still done by hand. Most of the work of filtering out fake news is still done by hand, and social bots have a long way to go before they can reliably spot fake news. Technical analysis and correlation with human intelligence are used to find and identify attacks. There is still a lot of work to do to standardise forensic processes, figure out the right data to collect, improve and standardise analysis techniques, and correlate these with intelligence from the ground.

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