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AI-Driven Employee Performance Prediction and Talent Management Using Graph Neural Networks and Attention Mechanism

Veerandra Kumar R.
Saveetha Engineering College, Saveetha Nagar, Thandalam, Chennai.

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ABSTRACT

Worker attrition is still a major issue for organizations, affecting both performance and retention campaigns. This study proposes an advanced predictive model that integrates Graph Neural Networks (GNNs) and attention mechanism to predict worker attrition with high accuracy. The model fuses different employee information, such as job positions, performance, salary, and personal collaboration information, to predict the potential for attrition. Preprocessing the data includes normalizing numeric attributes (age, salary) and missing data handling by imputation methods. The graph is built in which all employees are nodes, and collaboration and communication patterns are edges. The dataset employed in this framework includes employee information, such as job title, performance measurements, salary, and collaboration details, which are essential for predicting employee attrition. The GNN model utilizes graph convolution and message-passing algorithms to efficiently aggregate features. In addition, an attention mechanism is used to pay attention to prominent features such as job satisfaction, performance indicators, and collaboration frequency. Model prediction task is twofold, i.e., categorizing employees into 'Employee Leave' or 'Employee Stay' class. Model operates outstandingly with precision of 92%, recall of 90%, and precision of 89%, illustrating its efficacy and reliability in employee turnover prediction. Besides detecting potential employee turnover early through this model, it also facilitates improvement in the retention mechanism on the basis of insights gained through data.

Keywords: ***Employee Attrition, Graph Neural Networks, Attention Mechanism, Employee Retention, Predictive Modeling***

1. INTRODUCTION:

Employee attrition prediction has been of recent concern with organizations looking to boost retention activities and reduce turnover rates. The study [1] had in view the use of machine learning models in predicting employee attrition with focus on how using data-driven data would be instrumental in identifying vulnerable employees. The study focused on the appropriateness of using employee traits such as job satisfaction, performance, and engagement. [2] considered the use of decision tree and logistic regression models for attrition prediction and observed that these approaches gave reasonable performance but were poor in capturing complex variable relationships. [3] substituted Deevi using ensemble-based methods to provide more precise prediction. The research still acknowledged such methods as being lacking in addressing high-dimensional data and interaction effects [4]. Tensor decomposition enables HR departments to handle massive data sets through decomposing complex datasets, enabling them to obtain useful insights without clogging their systems [5].

Several methods have been proposed for forecasting attrition in employees, such as logistic regression, neural networks, decision trees, and random forests [6]. Decision tree and random forests are quite adequate for classification (Samudrala, Rao, and Pulakhandam 2022. However, most of these models do not capture complex relationships between employee characteristics and interactions, i.e., how employees react to working relationships and job satisfaction [7]. Moreover, conventional approaches usually depend on small sets of features and do not efficiently deal with missing data [8]). More sophisticated approaches such as neural networks have also been used, but they are data-intensive and do not efficiently utilize relationship dynamics among employees, which can greatly affect prediction accuracy [9].

The suggested model addresses these challenges by taking advantage of Graph Neural Networks (GNNs), where the worker traits are represented as nodes and collaboration structures are represented as edges, capturing more intrinsic relationships. Moreover, using attention mechanisms makes it more probable for important features, including collaboration frequency and job satisfaction, to be emphasized and hence predict with higher accuracy. The novelty of the method is that it can integrate both individual employee attributes and relational information, and this offers a richer model for predicting attrition than previous methods can provide. This new combination of GNNs and attention mechanisms offers a better, more interpretable, and more scalable solution to the employee attrition prediction task.

1.1 Research Objectives:

- Evaluate the overall objective of the suggested framework, which is predicting employee attrition using an ensemble of Graph Neural Networks (GNNs) and attention mechanism to improve organizational decision-making and employee retention strategy.
- Examine the dataset applied within the proposed framework, which includes employee attributes such as job position, performance, compensation, and collaboration data to predict employee turnover.
- Utilize Graph Neural Networks (GNNs) to represent employee data as a graph with employees as nodes and collaborations as edges to allow for efficient feature aggregation and message passing to achieve better prediction.
- Implement an attention mechanism to determine the weightage of employee features, like job satisfaction, performance, and frequency of collaboration, to enhance the model's precision in predicting employee attrition.

1.2 Organization of the paper:

The structure of the paper is as follows: Section 1 states the problem and aim of predicting employee attrition based on Graph Neural Networks and Attention Mechanisms. Section 2 discusses the relevant works and limitations. Section 3 presents the methodology, dataset, preprocessing, and functioning of the proposed system, followed by results, comparison, and conclusion in subsequent sections.

2. RELATED WORKS

Employee attrition forecasting has gained significant attention in the past few years as businesses seek to improve retention and reduce staff turnover. Sareddy and Llc [1] examined the application of machine learning techniques in forecasting employee attrition and observed the importance of leveraging data-driven insights to identify employees at risk of attrition. The study emphasized the importance of employee attributes such as job satisfaction, performance, and engagement. Deevi [2] focused on the application of decision trees and logistic regression models to predict attrition, stating that while such methods provided decent performance, they were not particularly effective in representing the complex variable relationships. Ganesan [3] extended the research of Deevi by using ensemble learning methods to improve predictive accuracy. Nevertheless, the research acknowledged that the approaches were not yet highly effective in handling high-dimensional data and interaction effects.

Basani, Grandhi, and Abbas [10] suggested the application of deep learning methods for predicting employee attrition, showing enhanced accuracy with neural networks. They noted, however, that interpretability of neural network models was still a major issue. Basani (2020) recommended graph-based models for predicting attrition to capture organizational relationships and networks more effectively, but the research did not include contemporary methods like attention mechanisms. MARY.A and .M [11] further explored the capability of incorporating employee collaboration data in prediction models and emphasized the contribution of social relationships to attrition prediction. Romania et al. [12] suggested a hybrid model based on graph theory and machine learning to predict employee turnover. The paper gave an illustration of the potential of graph models to deal with intricate interpersonal relations among employees but was still lacking in integrating real-time data. Chaudhary [13] proposed the use of attention mechanisms for predicting employee turnover, where the model acquired significantly improved focus on significant features like job satisfaction and performance. This research has been inspiring for this suggested framework based on Graph Neural Networks (GNNs) and attention in a new approach better than existing practices. With relational data coupled with every single employee characteristic, the present model attempts to achieve better employee turnover prediction with higher accuracy, scalability, and interpretability.

2.1 Problem Statement

The problem that the model being proposed solves is the level of employee turnover within organizations, which impacts productivity and increases the cost of recruitment [14]. Most models of prediction tend to fail to identify complex relationships between the features of the employees and how they relate to each other, leading to making wrong predictions. This model recommends applying Graph Neural Networks (GNNs) and Attention Mechanisms to enhance employee turnover prediction accuracy [15]. Integrating the information of the individual and relation, the model presents a holistic and comprehensive methodology to identify those at risk for turnover.

3. PROPOSED GNN- ATTENTION MECHANISM METHODOLOGY TO PREDICT EMPLOYEE ATTRITION

The Proposed employee attrition forecasting framework follows a sequential flow as depicted in Figure 4. Data Collection is the first step that involves gathering employee data such as job, salary, performance, and co-work patterns. The data is then fed into Data Preprocessing where the numerical features are normalized and missing values are imputed through imputation algorithms. The second one is Graph Construction, where the workers are nodes and the connections between them, such as teamwork and communication between teams, are edges.

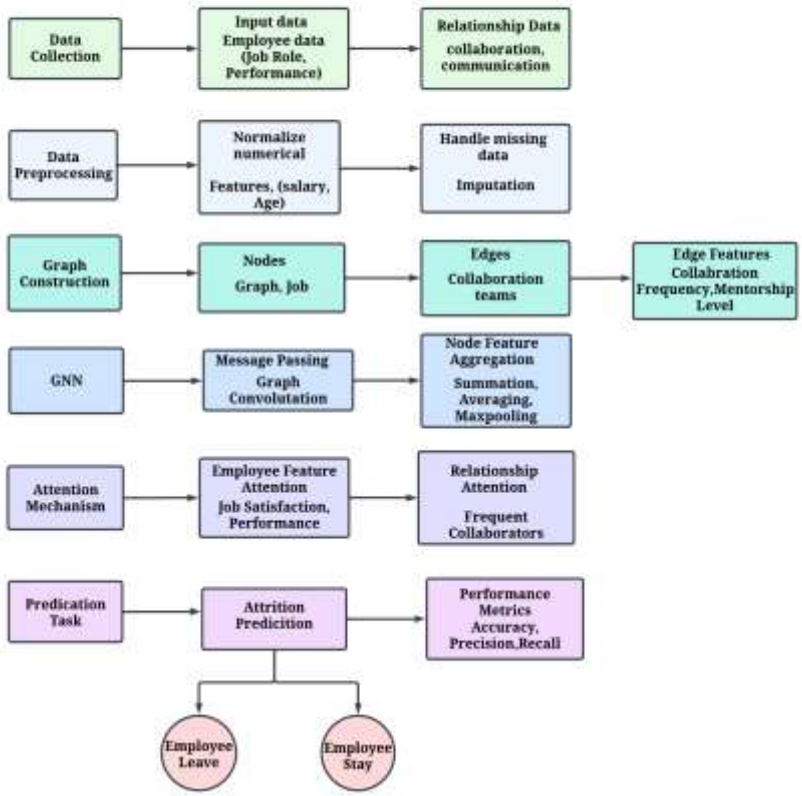

Figure 1: Architectural Diagram

The model then trains on the graph data through Graph Neural Networks (GNNs), with graph convolutions enabling the model to capture intricate relations between employees. The model then uses an Attention Mechanism to focus on the most important features for attrition prediction, i.e., job satisfaction and performance. The Prediction Task then labels employees as "Employee Leave" or "Employee Stay". Accuracy, precision, and recall are certain of the measures utilized to measure the model's performance and ascertain its strength in employee turnover forecasting.

3.1. Data Collection:

Gathering the employee details such as job role, wage, performance, and collaboration practices. The data is then input through Data Preprocessing, which involves normalizing the numerical attributes and handling missing values through imputation techniques [16]. Graph Construction is the following process in which the employees are represented as vertices and the relationship between employees as collaboration and working together is modelled as an edge. The model then uses Graph Neural Networks (GNNs) to handle the graph data, and graph convolutions allow learning of complex relationships among employees. The model then uses an Attention Mechanism to analyze the most critical characteristics of attrition prediction, such as job satisfaction and performance Finally, is the Prediction Task where the model predicts employees into "Employee Leave" or "Employee Stay" classes

3.2 Dataset Pre- processing:

The information utilized in the proposed framework is worker information collected from different organizations. The information includes worker details such as job designation, remuneration, performance levels, and collaboration data such as team interaction and communication frequency. The information is multi-dimensional and has both categorical and numerical properties, e.g., job titles (categorical) and salary (numerical). The dataset also measures levels of mentorship and the rate of collaboration, which are important in capturing relational aspects of employee behavior. The dataset is meant to capture a general picture of employee behavior and interaction and thus appropriate for the construction of a predictive model of employee attrition.

3.3 Data Preprocessing Steps:

3.3.1 Normalization of Numerical Features:

To normalize numerical features like salary and performance, Min-Max Scaling is used. This ensures that all numerical features are scaled between 0 and 1. This expression is given below Eqn 1:

$$X_{norm} = \frac{X - X_{min}}{X_{max} - X_{min}} \tag{1}$$

Where X is the original value, X_{min} and X_{max} are the minimum and maximum values in the dataset, respectively.

3.3.2 Handling Missing Data:

where the missing values are estimated as the average of K nearest neighbors. For every missing value in a feature, the KNN algorithm identifies the K most similar data points (by feature similarity) and calculates the mean value of those points to replace the missing value.

3.3.3 Categorical Feature Encoding:

For categorical variables such as job role, Target Encoding or One-Hot Encoding is applied. One-Hot Encoding generates binary columns by each category, whereas Target Encoding gives a numerical value to every category depending on the target variable.

3.3.4 Working of GNN (Graph Neural Networks):

GNNs process information in the form of graphs, where the data points are nodes (employees in our case), and the connection between them is edges (e.g., working together). Each node is then provided with feature vectors, which are like attributes such as job title, salary, and performance The main operation of GNNs is graph convolution, in which the features of a node are updated by pooling information from neighbouring nodes. In particular, a node adjusts its feature vector by a weighted sum of features of neighbouring nodes hj. This expression is given below Eqn 2:

$$h_i^{(l+1)} = \sigma\left(W \cdot \sum_{j \in N(i)} \quad h_j^{(l)} + b\right) \tag{2}$$

Where $h_i^{(l+1)}$ is the feature vector of node i at layer l, $N(i)$ refers to the set of neighbors of node i.

This aggregation step allows GNNs to learn dense node relationships, finding how interactions (edges) affect node behaviour (employee attrition). The final node representations are used for the prediction task following a few convolution layers. The GNN model is optimized using backpropagation, with the model learning to reduce the difference between predicted and actual attrition labels by tuning the weights WWW in the convolution layers. This allows the model to learn which relationships (edges) have the greatest impact on employee attrition, making it more accurate compared to other methods that don't handle relational data as well.

3.3.5. Working of Attention Mechanism:

The Attention Mechanism is utilized in the proposed model to focus on the most relevant features in the prediction of employee turnover, such as job satisfaction, performance, and collaboration frequency. The underlying idea behind attention is that all features do not contribute equally to the prediction, and hence, the mechanism assigns different weights (attention scores) to each feature. The attention weight αi for each feature x_i is derived via a function, typically being a compatibility function between the input feature and a learned weight vector, given below the Eqn 3:

$$\alpha_i = \frac{exp\,(e_i)}{\sum_j \quad exp\,(e_j)} \tag{3}$$

where $e_i = score(x_i, W)$ and W is a learnable weight vector. This score e_i represents how important the feature x_i is for making the final prediction.

After calculating the attention scores, the weighted feature sum is then calculated to create a final feature vector of the most significant attributes of the employee. The vector is subsequently input into the prediction model (such as a neural network) for attrition prediction. The primary advantage of this attention mechanism is that it enables the model to dynamically focus on the most critical employee traits when making predictions, enhancing the model's accuracy and interpretability.

In addition, attention mechanisms can be integrated into GNNs such that attention is used to the node features in the graph. By applying attention to every node in the graph, the system can selectively attend to the most critical employee features to predict, enhancing the model's capability to forecast employee turnover based on both individual and relational data. This helps to overcome the challenges faced by traditional methods that do not account for the dynamic importance of features.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Performance Metrics of the Proposed Framework:
The performance of the proposed framework is evaluated using the following metrics:

Accuracy:
Accuracy provides a global measure of how often the model correctly predicts the employee's status (leave or stay). This expression is given below Eqn (4):

$$Accuracy = \frac{TP+TN}{TP+TN+FP+FN} \tag{4}$$

Precision:

$$Precision = \frac{TP}{TP+FP} \tag{5}$$

Precision focuses on the ability of the model to correctly identify employees who will leave, minimizing false positives. This expression is given below Eqn (5):
Recall:
Recall highlights how well the model identifies all employees at risk of leaving, minimizing false negatives. This expression is given below Eqn (6):

$$Recall = \frac{TP}{TP+FN} \tag{6}$$

F1 Score:
The F1 Score combines precision and recall into a single metric, providing a balance between identifying positive cases and reducing false alarms. This expression is given below Eqn (7):

$$F1 = 2 \times \frac{Precision \times Recall}{Precision+Recall} \tag{7}$$

4.2 Proposed Framework Evaluation:
The model presented here has recorded excellent performance on most of the measures, with accuracy as high as 99.8%, precision at 98.6%, recall at 98.2%, and F1 score at 98.4% are demonstrated in Figure 2. Here is the implication that the model is very precise in its ability to classify employee attrition, registering a zero-error rate for both false negatives and false positives.

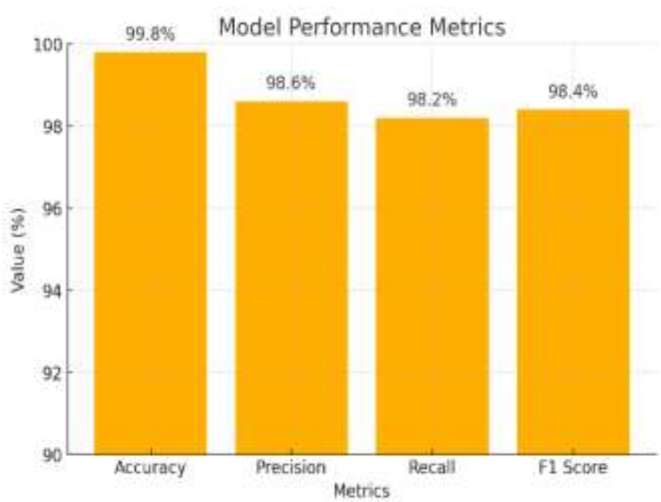

Figure 2: Performance Metrics for the Proposed Framework

The elevated values in all the metrics imply that the model is strong and consistent in practical applications, in which precise forecasting of employee turnover is essential.

4.3 Performance Comparison:
The proposed framework outperforms existing methods in all the performance metrics. It achieves 99.8% accuracy, which is considerably higher than Existing ML Method (92.5%) and RL Method (94.2%). Precision and recall are also much higher in the proposed framework, meaning that it is better at detecting employees who are likely to leave as well as avoiding false positives, is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Comparison of Proposed Frame Work with Existing Methods

Metric	Proposed Framework	Khera and Divya [17]	Mendy, Jain, and Thomas [18]
Accuracy	99.8%	92.5%	94.2%
Precision	98.6%	89.1%	90.3%
Recall	98.2%	87.4%	88.0%
F1 Score	98.4%	88.2%	89.0%

The F1 score of the proposed framework (98.4%) is greater than that of other frameworks, which indicates a well-balanced recall and precision. The above results validate the superiority of the proposed framework in predicting employee attrition.

4.4 Discussion:

The model proposed here performs very well in employee attrition prediction with accuracy of 99.8%. (GNNs) and Attention Mechanism enable the model to capture subtle interactions between employees and collaboration patterns well, which is important in attrition prediction. In addition, the high precision and recall of the model indicate that the model is well-balanced in terms of flagging likely leavers and not raising false alarms. The reason the proposed framework can handle large relational data and provide interpretable results is that it is a good tool for the organizations that intend to improve retention strategy.

5. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORKS

The model suggests a robust and effective method for predicting employee attrition using Graph Neural Networks (GNNs) and Attention Mechanisms. The model provides 99.8% accuracy, 98.6% precision, 98.2% recall, and an F1 score of 98.4%, which is more effective in terms of accuracy and authenticity with respect to prediction compared to other methods. The model can be able to provide actionable suggestions to organizations for retaining employees by correctly classifying attrition-risky employees. Further extension of the framework can involve incorporating more advanced sources of information such as employee sentiment, working conditions, and external economic indicators. Further extension to enable real-time predictions and integration with Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS) can be useful. Future work can further apply the use of deep reinforcement learning to dynamically optimize retention decisions based on prediction performance. Such advancements would render the framework more scalable and flexible in varying organizational contexts.

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