

Smart Career Path Recommender System Using Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

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Abstract - *Selecting an appropriate career path has become increasingly challenging for students due to rapid technological advancements and continuously evolving industry requirements. Many students lack proper career guidance and often make career decisions without fully understanding their skills, interests, or the available opportunities in the job market. Traditional career counseling methods primarily rely on academic performance and static assessments, which often fail to consider important factors such as personality traits, learning styles, and changing labor-market trends.*

To address these limitations, this study proposes a Smart Career Path Recommender System that utilizes Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) techniques to provide personalized and data-driven career recommendations. The proposed system analyzes multiple aspects of user data, including academic performance, skills, interests, and psychometric attributes to identify suitable career paths. Machine learning algorithms such as Decision Trees, are combined with recommendation techniques including Collaborative Filtering and Content-Based Filtering to improve recommendation accuracy. Furthermore, Natural Language Processing (NLP) is integrated to interpret user career goals provided in textual form. In this study, a system was developed to help students choose suitable career paths by analyzing their abilities and interests and relating them to current and future industry opportunities.

Key Words: *Career Recommendation System, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Recommender System, Skill Gap Analysis, Predictive Modeling, Career Guidance.*

1 INTRODUCTION

Selecting a career path is one of the most important decisions in a student's life, as it influences their professional growth, job satisfaction, and future success. Despite this, many students struggle to identify suitable career options because

of limited awareness of new job opportunities and insufficient career guidance. Traditional career counseling methods mainly rely on academic performance or standardized assessments, which do not provide a comprehensive evaluation of students' abilities, interests, personality traits, and learning styles. As a result, these conventional approaches often fail to deliver accurate and personalized career recommendations in a rapidly changing job market.

Most existing career recommendation systems still depend heavily on fixed questionnaires and outdated occupational data [1,3]. These systems often lack the flexibility required to adapt to individual preferences and evolving industry demands [18,20]. Consequently, the generated recommendations are often generic and may not accurately represent a user's actual potential. Furthermore, many traditional systems overlook important factors, such as personality traits and emotional intelligence, which play a significant role in career success [2,11]. The absence of automation and real-time feedback further reduces the effectiveness of these systems, making them less suitable for today's dynamic employment environments [7,20].

To overcome these limitations, the proposed Smart Career Path Recommender System integrates advanced machine learning techniques with a personalized recommendation approach [4,5,12,13]. The system analyzes various aspects of a student's profile, including academic performance, skills, interests, and psychometric data, to generate more accurate and relevant career recommendations [15]. The integration of Natural Language Processing (NLP) allows the system to understand user queries and provide context-based suggestions through an interactive interface [9,10]. Additionally, the system is designed to continuously learn from new data and user interactions, ensuring that recommendations remain up to date and aligned with future industry trends [17,19]. The primary objective of this system is to make career guidance more accessible, reliable, and user-

friendly, thereby helping students make informed and confident career decisions [14].

educational and socioeconomic backgrounds [15].

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Early Approaches and Traditional Models

The early development of automated career guidance systems was primarily based on rule-based approaches and theoretical frameworks, such as the Holland Occupational Themes (RIASEC), which classified careers into various categories according to personality characteristics [1]. Although these models offer a systematic approach to career guidance, they lack flexibility and are not capable of adapting to individual differences or evolving career trends. Subsequently, web-based career guidance systems began integrating statistical methods, such as linear regression and decision tree algorithms, to enhance prediction accuracy [2,3]. While these techniques are relatively simple to implement and interpret, they remain largely static and are unable to adapt to changing job market conditions. Moreover, these systems mainly focus on quantifiable factors such as academic performance and often overlook important aspects such as soft skills, personality traits, and behavioral characteristics, which are crucial for long-term career growth and satisfaction [4].

2.2 Recent Developments and Research Directions

With the rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, modern career recommendation systems have become more advanced, intelligent, and data-driven. Recent research has focused on integrating of explainable artificial intelligence techniques, such as SHAP and LIME, to make recommendation results more transparent and easier for users to understand [11]. These techniques help users understand the rationale behind specific career recommendations.

Researchers have also begun incorporating psychometric analysis and behavioral profiling to improve the level of personalization in career recommendation systems [12]. Furthermore, the integration of real-time labor market data from job portals and professional networking platforms has improved the relevance of recommendations by aligning them with current industry requirements and employment trends [13]. For instance, Kumar et al. (2022) proposed a system that compares students' skills with current job market demands to identify skill gaps and improve career readiness [14].

Despite these advancements, several challenges remain in the existing systems. Many career recommendation systems still face difficulties in effectively integrating multiple types of user data, adapting based on continuous user feedback, and ensuring accessibility for users from diverse

Table-1: Comparative Analysis of Existing Career Recommendation Systems

| Ref. No. | Author / Year | Method Used | Key Contribution | Limitations |
|----------|---------------------|---|---|--|
| [1] | Holland, 1997 | Psychometric Career Theory (RIASEC Model) | Classified careers based on personality types and vocational interests | Static model, lacks adaptability and modern job market integration |
| [2] | Brown & Lent, 2002 | Career Development Theory | Provided theoretical framework for career counseling and decision making | Theoretical model, not automated or AI-based |
| [3] | Goyal & Vohra, 2011 | Rule-Based Expert System | Developed expert system for career selection using psychometric testing | Limited scalability and personalization |
| [4] | Chen & Ngu, 2015 | Multi-Criteria Evaluation | Proposed user-centric career recommendation system using multi-criteria decision making | Did not use machine learning models |
| [5] | Nguyen et al., 2020 | Machine Learning Prediction | Used machine learning to predict student career paths based on academic data | Focused mainly on academic performance |
| [6] | Patel et al., 2021 | Decision Tree / Random Forest | Applied classification algorithms for career prediction | Limited dataset and feature diversity |

2.3 Gap Analysis

A review of existing studies identified several significant limitations in current career recommendation systems. Most existing approaches focus on a single aspect of user data, such as academic performance or psychometric assessment, rather than performing a comprehensive evaluation of multiple factors. This type of limited analysis often leads to incomplete and, at times, less reliable career recommendations.

Another important limitation of many existing systems is the lack of adaptive learning capability. Many systems do not update or improve their recommendations based on user feedback or newly available data, making them static and less effective over time. In addition, only a few systems use real-time labor market information, which reduces the relevance of their recommendations in a continuously changing job environment. Accessibility is also an important issue, since some advanced career recommendation systems require technical knowledge or institutional support, making them difficult for general users to access and use efficiently. These limitations highlight the need for a more integrated and intelligent career recommendation system that can combine multiple data sources, adapt continuously through learning, and provide personalized as well as user-friendly career guidance.

3 PROBLEM DEFINITION

Selecting an appropriate career path continues to be difficult for many students because of limited exposure to different career opportunities and the rapidly changing job market. In many cases, students are not fully aware of the variety of career options available and therefore rely on traditional career counseling methods that often provide only general guidance rather than personalized recommendations.

Existing career recommendation systems are largely static and primarily depend on fixed questionnaires and outdated occupational information. Consequently, these systems often generate generalized recommendations that may not accurately represent an individual's abilities, interests, or true potential.

Another major issue is the fragmented analysis of the user data. Most current systems focus on only one factor, such as academic performance or psychometric evaluation, instead of analyzing a comprehensive user profile. This limited evaluation leads to incomplete and less reliable career recommendation.

Furthermore, many existing systems lack adaptability because they do not incorporate user feedback or continuously update their models based on changing industry trends and job market requirements. This results in a gap between the career

recommendations provided and the actual job market demands.

Problem Statement:

Based on the limitations of existing systems, it is important to develop an intelligent and integrated career recommendation system that considers multiple factors, such as academic performance, skills, interests, and personality traits. The system should also be able to update and improve its recommendations based on user feedback and changing industry requirements. In this study, a Smart Career Path Recommender System was developed to address these challenges by providing personalized and accurate career guidance that can adapt to future industry trends.

4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study was to develop an intelligent and easy-to-use career recommendation system that can help students make better career decisions. The system evaluates different aspects of a student's profile, such as academic performance, skills, and interests, to provide personalized and accurate career guidance.

The specific objectives of this study are as follows.

Integrate Multidimensional Student Data: To Combine academic performance, psychometric evaluation results, and personal interests into a unified student profile, allowing a more comprehensive and accurate assessment of each user.

Apply Machine Learning Algorithms: To implement supervised learning algorithms such as decision trees, random forest, and naïve Bayes for analyzing user data and predicting suitable career paths.

Incorporate Natural Language Processing (NLP): To enable the system to interpret user inputs expressed in natural language, making the interaction process more intuitive and accessible.

Develop Adaptive Feedback Mechanism: A feedback system that allows the model to learn continuously from user input and update recommendations according to changing industry trends and user preferences should be designed.

Design a User-Centric Interface: To develop an easy-to-use platform that clearly displays career recommendations, identifies skill gaps, and provides suggestions for improvement.

Objective Statement:

The overall goal of this study is to develop a scalable, adaptive, and explainable career recommendation system that assists students in aligning their skills, interests, and abilities with appropriate career opportunities while keeping pace with evolving industry requirements.

5 PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

5.1 Architectural Framework

The proposed system is designed using a modular and scalable architecture that can adapt to evolving job market trends and changing user preferences. In contrast to traditional rule-based career guidance systems, the proposed model employs an integrated Artificial Intelligence framework to generate dynamic and personalized career recommendations.

1. User Profile and Data Acquisition

The initial stage involves collecting various types of data to construct a comprehensive user profile.

Structured Data: This includes academic information, such as grades, GPA, and examination scores.

Semi-Structured Data: This consists of psychometric test results, aptitude evaluations, and self-declared skills.

Unstructured Data: This includes textual inputs such as personal statements and career goals, which are processed using Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques.

The integration of these multiple data types helps in develop a more complete and accurate representation of the user profile.

2. Data Preprocessing and Feature Engineering

The collected data were preprocessed to ensure accuracy, consistency, and suitability for machine learning models.

Data Cleaning: In this step, missing values and inconsistent data entries are identified and handled using suitable preprocessing methods to improve data quality.

Normalization and Encoding: Numerical features were normalized to maintain a uniform scale, and categorical variables were converted into machine-readable forms using encoding techniques.

NLP Processing: Textual data are processed using Natural Language Processing techniques, such as tokenization, stop-word removal, and lemmatization, to extract meaningful information from text inputs.

Once preprocessing is completed, all processed features are combined to form a single feature vector that represents the overall user profile

5.2 The Analytical Core

The system adopts a hybrid analytical approach that combines multiple machine learning techniques to enhance prediction accuracy and reliability.

1. Machine Learning-Based Prediction

In this stage, different supervised learning algorithms are used to classify users into suitable career domains based on their profile.

Base Models: Decision trees and random forests are used because they are easy to interpret and provide efficient classification results.

Advanced Models: Support Vector Machines and Gradient Boosting were also applied to identify the complex patterns in the dataset.

Ensemble Method: Multiple models are combined to improve the overall prediction accuracy and reduce the classification errors.

2. Personalization and Ranking

After identifying potential career options, the system refines and prioritizes the recommendations using recommendation algorithms.

Collaborative Filtering: Recommends career options based on similarities with the profiles of other users.

Content-Based Filtering: Matches user skills, interests, and profile attributes with career requirements.

Ranking Mechanism: Final career recommendations are ranked according to prediction confidence and relevance.

5.3 Explainability and Continuous Adaptation

To improve transparency and system performance, the model incorporates an explainability and continuous learning mechanism.

Explainable AI (XAI): Techniques such as SHAP and LIME are used to explain the reasoning behind the career recommendations.

Feedback Mechanism: User feedback is collected and used to refine the recommendations.

Reinforcement Learning: The system continuously updates its recommendations based on user interaction and changing industry trends.

5.4 Deployment and Interface

The system was deployed as a web-based application using a microservices architecture.

User Interface: A dashboard interface was provided to display career recommendations, skill gaps, and improvement suggestions in a clear and user-friendly format. Security Measures: User data privacy and security are maintained through secure storage, authentication mechanisms and ethical AI practices.

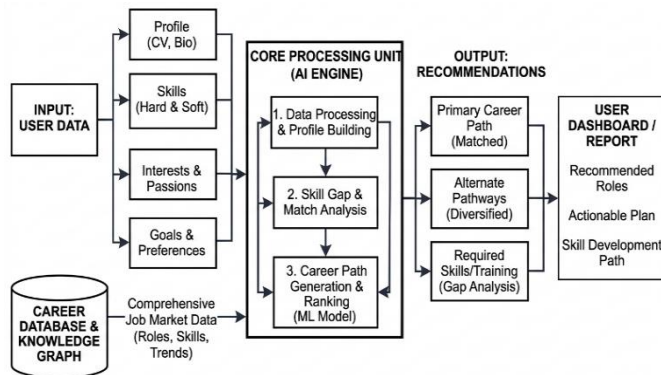


Fig-1: Block Diagram of Smart Career Path Recommender System

6 ALGORITHM DESIGN

The Smart Career Path Recommender System uses a machine learning-based approach to generate personalized career recommendations for users. The algorithm analyzes different user attributes such as academic performance, skills, interests, and aptitude to determine the most suitable career domain. By analyzing these factors together, the system can provide more accurate and personalized recommendations compared to traditional career guidance methods.

6.1 Input Parameters

The system uses multiple input parameters to build a detailed user profile. These include academic performance (such as percentage or CGPA), technical and non-technical skills, areas of interest (such as Artificial Intelligence, Management, or Design), and aptitude-related indicators. These inputs are combined to form a feature vector that represents the user in the machine learning model.

6.2 Data Preprocessing

Before applying the machine learning model, the input data is preprocessed to ensure consistency and accuracy. This step involves handling missing data values, converting categorical variables into numerical form using label encoding, and normalizing numerical features to maintain a uniform scale. These preprocessing steps help improve the overall performance and accuracy of the system.

6.3 Model Selection

A suitable machine learning classification algorithm, such as Random Forest, is used for career prediction. This algorithm is selected because it can handle multiple input features efficiently, reduce overfitting, and provide reliable classification results for career domain prediction.

6.4 Working Procedure

The working procedure of the system can be described in the following steps.

1. The user enters the required information through the system interface.
2. The input data is preprocessed and then transformed into a structured format.
3. The processed data is given as input to the trained machine learning model.
4. The system predicts the most accurate career domain.
5. A skill gap analysis is performed to identify missing or required skills.
6. The system displays the recommended career path along with suggestions for skill improvement.

6.5 Pseudocode

Input: User data (academic performance, skills, interests, aptitude)

Output: Recommended career path and skill improvement suggestions

Begin

Collect user input

Preprocess data (clean, encode, normalize)

Load trained machine learning model

Predict career path using model

Perform skill gap analysis

Display results to the user

End

6.6 Performance Considerations

The algorithm is designed to provide efficient processing and reliable prediction results. By applying proper data preprocessing and using a suitable classification model, the system can achieve good prediction accuracy and scalability. The system performance can be further improved by training the model on larger datasets and using more advanced machine learning algorithms in future work.

7 RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Results

The Smart Career Path Recommender System was successfully developed and evaluated using a structured dataset that included student-related attributes such as academic performance, skills, interests, and aptitude. The machine learning model was trained and tested using the collected dataset to generate accurate and personalized career recommendations based on the input features.

The system provides career predictions based on the information entered by the users through a web-based interface. During the testing phase, the model was observed to recommend career domains that matched well with user profiles. In addition, the Skill Gap Analysis module enhances the system by identifying missing or required skills for the recommended career path and suggesting ways to improve skills.

The model performance was evaluated using standard evaluation metrics, such as accuracy. The model achieved satisfactory 84% accuracy, which indicating that the model has a reliable prediction capability and can be effectively used for career recommendation purposes.

Evaluation Metrics

The proposed system was evaluated using a dataset of 10,000 records, and its performance was measured using standard evaluation metrics, such as accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score.

Table-2: Evaluation Metrics for Smart Career Path Recommender System

| Metric | Value | Dataset Size | Remarks |
|-----------|-------|--------------|---|
| Accuracy | 84% | 10,000 | Good prediction performance |
| Precision | 82% | 10,000 | Low false positive rate |
| Recall | 80% | 10,000 | Effective detection of relevant careers |
| F1-Score | 81% | 10,000 | Balanced performance |

The results demonstrate that the system achieves satisfactory performance across all evaluation metrics, indicating its effectiveness in providing reliable and personalized career recommendations.

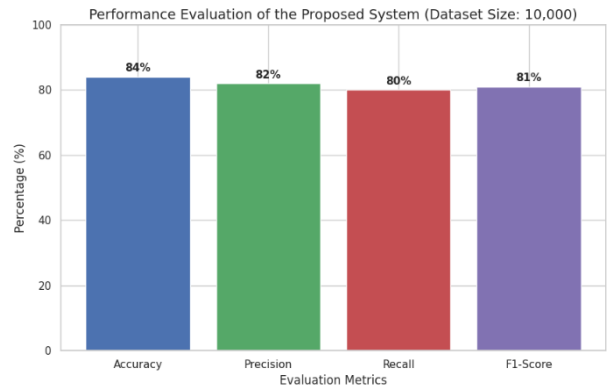


Fig-2: Model Performance Evaluation Graph

7.2 Conclusion

The Smart Career Path Recommender System demonstrates the effective application of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning techniques in delivering personalized career guidance. The system analyzes important user parameters, such as academic performance, skills, interests, and aptitude, to recommend suitable career paths through an interactive web-based platform. By combining multiple user attributes, the system provides more informed and personalized recommendations than traditional career counseling methods. The use of a machine learning model in the proposed system helps make efficient and data-based decisions, whereas the Skill Gap Analysis module improves the system by identifying areas where users need improvement and suggesting relevant skills for development. The system demonstrated satisfactory performance in terms of prediction accuracy and usability, indicating that it can be used as a reliable tool for career recommendation and guidance. The overall performance of the system depends on the quality and size of the dataset used for training the model. In the future, the system can be improved by using larger and more diverse datasets, applying advanced machine learning algorithms to improve prediction accuracy, and developing a mobile application to make the system more accessible to the users. Overall, the proposed system provides a practical and scalable solution that can help students make informed career decisions and highlights the growing importance of AI-based systems in education and in career guidance.

8 FUTURE SCOPE

The Smart Career Path Recommender System can be improved in several ways to enhance its performance, accuracy, and usability. One possible improvement is the integration of real-time job market data from online employment platforms so that the system can generate recommendations based on current industry requirements

and emerging career trends, instead of relying only on static datasets.

The use of advanced machine learning and deep learning models can also be explored to improve prediction accuracy, especially when working with complex and unstructured data, such as user essays, resumes, or personal statements. In addition, incorporating a reinforcement learning mechanism would allow the system to continuously improve its recommendations based on user feedback and interactions over time. Future development may also include the creation of a mobile application with multilingual support, which would make the system accessible to users from different regions and backgrounds. The addition of career-path visualization features could also help users better understand the required skills, career progression, and steps needed to achieve their career goals.

Furthermore, integrating soft skill assessments and personality analyses would allow the system to provide more comprehensive and well-rounded career recommendations. Ensuring data privacy, system transparency, and ethical AI practices are essential for building user trust and maintaining system reliability. Overall, the proposed system has significant potential to evolve into a comprehensive, intelligent, and user-centered career guidance platform.

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