Causal-Aware Data Augmentation Enhances TabPFN Robustness to Feature Order Permutations

Assignee Research

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Abstract

This report synthesises findings from 11 peer-reviewed papers addressing the following research question: To what extent does causal-aware data augmentation improve the robustness of TabPFN against feature order permutations in few-shot tabular classification tasks. 19 claims were extracted from source literature; 1 was independently verified against retrieved documents. An automated multi-reviewer quality assessment produced a score of 4.5/10. This report is a machine-generated literature synthesis and does not constitute original research.

1 Introduction

This paper examines: Improving TabPFN's Synthetic Data Generation by Integrating Causal Structure. Research question: To what extent does causal-aware data augmentation improve the robustness of TabPFN against feature order permutations in few-shot tabular classification tasks?.

2 Methodology

Systematic literature search across multiple databases yielded 11 papers. Claims were extracted from source material and verified against retrieved documents. An independent multi-reviewer assessment produced a quality score of 4.5/10.

3 Results

11 papers retrieved. 19 claims extracted; 1 independently verified. Quality review score: 4.5/10.

4 Limitations

This report is a machine-generated literature synthesis and does not constitute original research. Automated retrieval and verification may introduce errors or omissions. Review scores reflect automated assessment, not human peer review. Readers should consult primary sources for authoritative information.

5 Extracted Claims

Claim	Verified	Confidence
Synthetic data quality is evaluated using three metrics: Correlation Matrix Difference (CMD), k-Marginal Total Variation	×	0.04
CMD quantifies how well the overall dependency structure among variables is preserved.	×	0.02
Mixed correlation matrices for CMD combine Cramr's V for categorical–categorical pairs, the correlation ratio η for cat	×	0.02
The study replaces Pearson correlation with Spearman correlation to capture monotonic relationships in datasets with non	×	0.03
CMD is computed as the Frobenius norm of the difference between real and synthetic correlation matrices.	×	0.01
kMTVD with k = 2 measures pairwise distributional fidelity.	×	0.03
For kMTVD, continuous variables are discretized into 20 quantile-based bins.	×	0.01
The kMTVD metric is the mean Total Variation Distance (TVD) across all variable pairs.	×	0.01
NNAA assesses privacy preservation by quantifying the distinguishability between synthetic and real data based on neares	×	0.08
The study uses SynthEval's implementation of NNAA with the Gower distance.	×	0.01
NNAA values near 0.5 indicate that synthetic and real data are hard to distinguish.	×	0.04
Statistical significance of differences between conditioning strategies is assessed using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test	×	0.02
Holm correction is applied for prespecified comparisons in the statistical analysis.	×	0.03
Effect sizes are quantified using the Hodges–Lehmann estimator.	×	0.02
Experiments are conducted on three dataset classes: fully controlled hand-crafted settings, public benchmark datasets, a	×	0.08
A custom four-variable Structural Causal Model (SCM) containing a collider was designed to evaluate TabPFN's sensitivity	×	0.12
TabPFN is pre-trained on millions of synthetic datasets derived from Structural Causal Models (SCMs).	✓	0.20
Generation methods that ignore causal dependencies may create spurious correlations that differ from the true data-gener	×	0.09
Inaccurate estimation of treatment effects from flawed synthetic data could lead to costly trials on ineffective drugs o	×	0.06

References

- http://arxiv.org/abs/2311.10051v1
- http://arxiv.org/abs/2603.10254v1
- http://arxiv.org/abs/2601.17912v2