

Package ‘sgboost’

May 9, 2026

Title Sparse-Group Boosting

Version 0.2.0

Description

Sparse-group boosting to be used in conjunction with the 'mboost' for modeling grouped data. Applicable to all sparse-group lasso type problems where within-group and between-group sparsity is desired. Interprets and visualizes individual variables and groups.

Imports dplyr, mboost, stringr, rlang, tibble, ggplot2, ggforce

License MIT + file LICENSE

Encoding UTF-8

RoxygenNote 7.3.1

URL <https://github.com/FabianObster/sgboost>

BugReports <https://github.com/FabianObster/sgboost/issues>

Suggests knitr, rmarkdown, spelling, testthat (>= 3.0.0)

Config/testthat/edition 3

VignetteBuilder knitr

Language en-US

NeedsCompilation no

Author Fabian Obster [aut, cre, cph] (ORCID:
<<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6951-9869>>)

Maintainer Fabian Obster <fabian.obster@unibw.de>

Repository CRAN

Date/Publication 2025-02-17 20:00:02 UTC

Contents

balance	2
create_formula	3
get_coef	5

get_coef_path	6
get_varimp	7
plot_effects	8
plot_path	9
plot_varimp	11

Index	13
--------------	-----------

balance	<i>Balances selection frequencies for unequal groups</i>
---------	--

Description

Returns optimal degrees of freedom for group boosting to achieve more balanced variables selection. Groups should be defined through `group_df`. Each `base_learner`

Usage

```
balance(
  df = NULL,
  group_df = NULL,
  blearner = "bols",
  outcome_name = "y",
  group_name = "group_name",
  var_name = "var_name",
  n_reps = 3000,
  iterations = 15,
  nu = 0.5,
  red_fact = 0.9,
  min_weights = 0.01,
  max_weights = 0.99,
  intercept = TRUE,
  verbose = F
)
```

Arguments

<code>df</code>	data.frame to be analyzed
<code>group_df</code>	input data.frame containing variable names with group structure. All variables in <code>df</code> to used in the analysis must be present in this data.frame.
<code>blearner</code>	Type of baselearner. Default is 'bols'.
<code>outcome_name</code>	String indicating the name of dependent variable. Default is "y"
<code>group_name</code>	Name of column in <code>group_df</code> indicating the group structure of the variables. Default is "group_name".
<code>var_name</code>	Name of column in <code>group_df</code> containing the variable names to be used as predictors. Default is "var_name". should not contain categorical variables with more than two categories, as they are then treated as a group only.

n_reps	Number of samples to be drawn in each iteration
iterations	Number of iterations performed in the algorithm. Default is "20"
nu	Learning rate as the step size to move away from the current estimate. Default is 0.5
red_fact	Factor by which the learning rate is reduced if the algorithm overshoots, meaning the loss increases. Default is 0.9
min_weights	The minimum weight size to be used. Default is 0.01
max_weights	The maximum weight size to be used. Default is 0.99
intercept	Logical, should intercept be used?
verbose	Logical, should iteration be printed?

Value

Character containing the formula to be passed to `mboost::mboost()` yielding the sparse-group boosting for a given value mixing parameter alpha.

Examples

```
library(mboost)
library(dplyr)
set.seed(1)
df <- data.frame(
  x1 = rnorm(100), x2 = rnorm(100), x3 = rnorm(100),
  x4 = rnorm(100), x5 = runif(100)
)
df <- df %>%
  mutate_all(function(x) {
    as.numeric(scale(x))
  })
df$y <- df$x1 + df$x4 + df$x5
group_df <- data.frame(
  group_name = c(1, 1, 1, 2, 2),
  var_name = c("x1", "x2", "x3", "x4", "x5")
)

sgb_formula <- create_formula(alpha = 0.3, group_df = group_df)
sgb_model <- mboost(formula = sgb_formula, data = df)
summary(sgb_model)
```

create_formula

Create a sparse-group boosting formula

Description

Creates a `mboost` formula that allows to fit a sparse-group boosting model based on boosted Ridge Regression with mixing parameter alpha. The formula consists of a group baselearner part with degrees of freedom $1-\alpha$ and individual baselearners with degrees of freedom alpha. Groups should be defined through `group_df`. The corresponding modeling data should not contain categorical variables with more than two categories, as they are then treated as a group only.

Usage

```
create_formula(
  alpha = 0.3,
  group_df = NULL,
  blearner = "bols",
  outcome_name = "y",
  group_name = "group_name",
  var_name = "var_name",
  group_weights = "group_weights",
  intercept = FALSE
)
```

Arguments

alpha	Numeric mixing parameter. For alpha = 0 only group baselearners and for alpha = 1 only individual baselearners are defined.
group_df	input data.frame containing variable names with group structure.
blearner	Type of baselearner. Default is 'bols'.
outcome_name	String indicating the name of dependent variable. Default is "y"
group_name	Name of column in group_df indicating the group structure of the variables. Default is "group_name".
var_name	Name of column in group_df containing the variable names to be used as predictors. Default is "var_name". should not contain categorical variables with more than two categories, as they are then treated as a group only.
group_weights	Optional name of the column in group_df indication the group weights.
intercept	Logical, should intercept be used?

Value

Character containing the formula to be passed to `mboost::mboost()` yielding the sparse-group boosting for a given value mixing parameter alpha.

Examples

```
library(mboost)
library(dplyr)
set.seed(1)
df <- data.frame(
  x1 = rnorm(100), x2 = rnorm(100), x3 = rnorm(100),
  x4 = rnorm(100), x5 = runif(100)
)
df <- df %>%
  mutate_all(function(x) {
    as.numeric(scale(x))
  })
df$y <- df$x1 + df$x4 + df$x5
group_df <- data.frame(
  group_name = c(1, 1, 1, 2, 2),
```

```

  var_name = c("x1", "x2", "x3", "x4", "x5")
)

sgb_formula <- create_formula(alpha = 0.3, group_df = group_df)
sgb_model <- mboost(formula = sgb_formula, data = df)
summary(sgb_model)

```

get_coef

Aggregated and raw coefficients in a sparse group boosting model

Description

Computes the aggregated coefficients from group and individual baselearners. Also returns the raw coefficients associated with each baselearner.

Usage

```
get_coef(sgb_model)
```

Arguments

sgb_model Model of type mboost to compute the coefficients for.

Details

in a sparse group boosting models a variable in a dataset can be selected as an individual variable or as a group. Therefore there can be two associated effect sizes for the same variable. This function aggregates both and returns it in a data.frame.

Value

List of data.frames containing the a data.frame '\$raw' with the variable and the raw (Regression) coefficients and the data.frame '\$aggregated' with the aggregated (Regression) coefficients.

Examples

```

library(mboost)
library(dplyr)
set.seed(1)
df <- data.frame(
  x1 = rnorm(100), x2 = rnorm(100), x3 = rnorm(100),
  x4 = rnorm(100), x5 = runif(100)
)
df <- df %>%
  mutate_all(function(x) {
    as.numeric(scale(x))
  })
df$y <- df$x1 + df$x4 + df$x5
group_df <- data.frame(

```

```

group_name = c(1, 1, 1, 2, 2),
var_name = c("x1", "x2", "x3", "x4", "x5")
)

sgb_formula <- create_formula(alpha = 0.3, group_df = group_df)
sgb_model <- mboost(formula = sgb_formula, data = df)
sgb_coef <- get_coef(sgb_model)

```

get_coef_path	<i>Path of aggregated and raw coefficients in a sparse-group boosting model</i>
---------------	---

Description

Computes the aggregated coefficients from group and individual baselearners for each boosting iteration.

Usage

```
get_coef_path(sgb_model)
```

Arguments

sgb_model Model of type mboost to compute the coefficient path for .

Details

in a sparse-group boosting models a variable in a dataset can be selected as an individual variable or as a group. Therefore there can be two associated effect sizes for the same variable. This function aggregates both and returns it in a data.frame for each boosting iteration

Value

List of data.frames containing the a data.frame \$raw with the variable and the raw (Regression) coefficients and the data.frame \$aggregated with the aggregated (Regression) coefficients.

See Also

[get_coef\(\)](#)

Examples

```

library(mboost)
library(dplyr)
set.seed(1)
df <- data.frame(
  x1 = rnorm(100), x2 = rnorm(100), x3 = rnorm(100),
  x4 = rnorm(100), x5 = runif(100)
)

```

```
df <- df %>%
  mutate_all(function(x) {
    as.numeric(scale(x))
  })
df$y <- df$x1 + df$x4 + df$x5
group_df <- data.frame(
  group_name = c(1, 1, 1, 2, 2),
  var_name = c("x1", "x2", "x3", "x4", "x5")
)

sgb_formula <- create_formula(alpha = 0.3, group_df = group_df)
sgb_model <- mboost(formula = sgb_formula, data = df)
sgb_coef_path <- get_coef_path(sgb_model)
```

get_varimp

Variable importance of a sparse-group boosting model

Description

Variable importance is computed as relative reduction of loss-function attributed to each predictor (groups and individual variables). Returns a list of two data.frames. The first contains the variable importance of a sparse-group model in a data.frame for each predictor. The second one contains the aggregated relative importance of all groups vs. individual variables.

Usage

```
get_varimp(sgb_model)
```

Arguments

sgb_model Model of type mboost to compute the variable importance for.

Value

List of two data.frames. \$raw contains the name of the variables, group structure and variable importance on both group and individual variable basis. \$group_importance contains the the aggregated relative importance of all group baselearners and of all individual variables.

See Also

[mboost::varimp\(\)](#) which this function uses.

Examples

```
library(mboost)
library(dplyr)
set.seed(1)
df <- data.frame(
  x1 = rnorm(100), x2 = rnorm(100), x3 = rnorm(100),
```

```

  x4 = rnorm(100), x5 = runif(100)
)
df <- df %>%
  mutate_all(function(x) {
    as.numeric(scale(x))
  })
df$y <- df$x1 + df$x4 + df$x5
group_df <- data.frame(
  group_name = c(1, 1, 1, 2, 2),
  var_name = c("x1", "x2", "x3", "x4", "x5")
)

sgb_formula <- as.formula(create_formula(alpha = 0.3, group_df = group_df))
sgb_model <- mboost(formula = sgb_formula, data = df)
sgb_varimp <- get_varimp(sgb_model)

```

plot_effects

Visualizing a sparse-group boosting model

Description

Radar or scatter/lineplot visualizing the effects sizes relative to the variable importance in a sparse-group boosting model. Works also for a regular mboost model.

Usage

```

plot_effects(
  sgb_model,
  plot_type = "radar",
  prop = 0,
  n_predictors = 30,
  max_char_length = 5,
  base_size = 8
)

```

Arguments

sgb_model	Model of type mboost to be used.
plot_type	String indicating the type of visualization to use. 'radar' refers to a radar plot using polar coordinates. Here the angle is relative to the cumulative relative importance of predictors and the radius is proportional to the effect size. "clock" does the same as "radar" but uses clock coordinates instead of polar coordinates. "scatter" uses the effect size as y-coordinate and the cumulative relative importance as x-axis in a classical Scatter plot.
prop	Numeric value indicating the minimal importance a predictor/baselearner has to have to be plotted. Default value is zero, meaning all predictors are plotted. By increasing prop the number of plotted variables can be reduced. One can also use n_predictors for limiting the number of variables to be plotted directly.

n_predictors	The maximum number of predictors to be plotted. Default is 30. Alternative to prop.
max_char_length	The maximum character length of a predictor to be printed. Default is 5. For long variable names one may adjust this number.
base_size	The base_size argument to be passed to the ggplot2 theme ggplot2::theme_classic to be used to control the overall size of the figure. Default value is 8.

Value

ggplot2 object mapping the effect sizes and variable importance.

See Also

[get_coef\(\)](#), [get_varimp\(\)](#) which this function uses.

Examples

```
library(mboost)
library(dplyr)
set.seed(1)
df <- data.frame(
  x1 = rnorm(100), x2 = rnorm(100), x3 = rnorm(100),
  x4 = rnorm(100), x5 = runif(100)
)
df <- df %>%
  mutate_all(function(x) {
    as.numeric(scale(x))
  })
df$y <- df$x1 + df$x4 + df$x5
group_df <- data.frame(
  group_name = c(1, 1, 1, 2, 2),
  var_name = c("x1", "x2", "x3", "x4", "x5")
)

sgb_formula <- as.formula(create_formula(alpha = 0.3, group_df = group_df))
sgb_model <- mboost(formula = sgb_formula, data = df)
plot_effects(sgb_model)
```

plot_path

Coefficient path of a sparse-group boosting model

Description

Shows how the effect sizes change throughout the boosting iterations in a sparse-group boosting model. Works also for a regular mboost models. Color indicates the selection of group or individual variables within a boosting iteration.

Usage

```
plot_path(sgb_model, max_char_length = 5, base_size = 8)
```

Arguments

sgb_model	Model of type mboost to be used.
max_char_length	The maximum character length of a predictor to be printed. Default is 5. For long variable names one may adjust this number.
base_size	The base_size argument to be passed to the ggplot2 theme ggplot2::theme_bw to be used to control the overall size of the figure. Default value is 8.

Value

ggplot2 object mapping the effect sizes and variable importance.

See Also

[get_coef_path\(\)](#) which this function uses.

Examples

```
library(mboost)
library(dplyr)
set.seed(1)
df <- data.frame(
  x1 = rnorm(100), x2 = rnorm(100), x3 = rnorm(100),
  x4 = rnorm(100), x5 = runif(100)
)
df <- df %>%
  mutate_all(function(x) {
    as.numeric(scale(x))
  })
df$y <- df$x1 + df$x4 + df$x5
group_df <- data.frame(
  group_name = c(1, 1, 1, 2, 2),
  var_name = c("x1", "x2", "x3", "x4", "x5")
)

sgb_formula <- as.formula(create_formula(alpha = 0.4, group_df = group_df))
sgb_model <- mboost(formula = sgb_formula, data = df)
plot_path(sgb_model)
```

plot_varimp	<i>Variable importance bar plot of a sparse group boosting model</i>
-------------	--

Description

Visualizes the variable importance of a sparse-group boosting model. Color indicates if a predictor is an individual variable or a group.

Usage

```
plot_varimp(  
  sgb_model,  
  prop = 0,  
  n_predictors = 30,  
  max_char_length = 15,  
  base_size = 8  
)
```

Arguments

sgb_model	Model of type <code>mboost</code> to plot the variable importance.
prop	Numeric value indicating the minimal importance a predictor/baselearner has to have. Default value is zero, meaning all predictors are plotted. By increasing <code>prop</code> the number of plotted variables can be reduced. One can also use 'n_predictors' for limiting the number of variables to be plotted directly.
n_predictors	The maximum number of predictors to be plotted. Default is 30. Alternative to 'prop'.
max_char_length	The maximum character length of a predictor to be printed. Default is 15. For larger groups or long variable names one may adjust this number to differentiate variables from groups.
base_size	The <code>base_size</code> argument to be passed to the <code>ggplot2</code> theme <code>ggplot2::theme_bw</code> to be used to control the overall size of the figure. Default value is 8.

Details

Note that aggregated group and individual variable importance printed in the legend is based only on the plotted variables and not on all variables that were selected in the sparse-group boosting model.

Value

object of type `ggplot2`.

See Also

[get_varimp](#) which this function uses.

Examples

```
library(mboost)
library(dplyr)
set.seed(1)
df <- data.frame(
  x1 = rnorm(100), x2 = rnorm(100), x3 = rnorm(100),
  x4 = rnorm(100), x5 = runif(100)
)
df <- df %>%
  mutate_all(function(x) {
    as.numeric(scale(x))
  })
df$y <- df$x1 + df$x4 + df$x5
group_df <- data.frame(
  group_name = c(1, 1, 1, 2, 2),
  var_name = c("x1", "x2", "x3", "x4", "x5")
)

sgb_formula <- as.formula(create_formula(alpha = 0.3, group_df = group_df))
sgb_model <- mboost(formula = sgb_formula, data = df)
sgb_varimp <- plot_varimp(sgb_model)
```

Index

balance, [2](#)

create_formula, [3](#)

get_coef, [5](#)

get_coef(), [6](#), [9](#)

get_coef_path, [6](#)

get_coef_path(), [10](#)

get_varimp, [7](#), [11](#)

get_varimp(), [9](#)

ggplot2::theme_bw, [10](#), [11](#)

ggplot2::theme_classic, [9](#)

mboost::mboost(), [3](#), [4](#)

mboost::varimp(), [7](#)

plot_effects, [8](#)

plot_path, [9](#)

plot_varimp, [11](#)