Niamh McCombe [1] Xuemei Ding [1] Girijesh Prasad [1] David P. Finn[2] Stephen Todd [3] Paula L. McClean [4] KongFatt Wong-Lin [1]

Predicting Feature Imputability in the Absence of Ground Truth

[1] Intelligent Systems Research Centre, Ulster University, Magee Campus, Derry ~Londonderry, Northern Ireland, UK; [2]Pharmacology and Therapeutics, School of Medicine, National University of Ireland Galway, Galway, Ireland [3]Altnagelvin Area Hospital, Western Health and Social Care Trust; [4]Northern Ireland Centre for Stratified Medicine, Biomedical Sciences Research Institute, Ulster University, Derry ~ Londonderry, Northern Ireland, UK.
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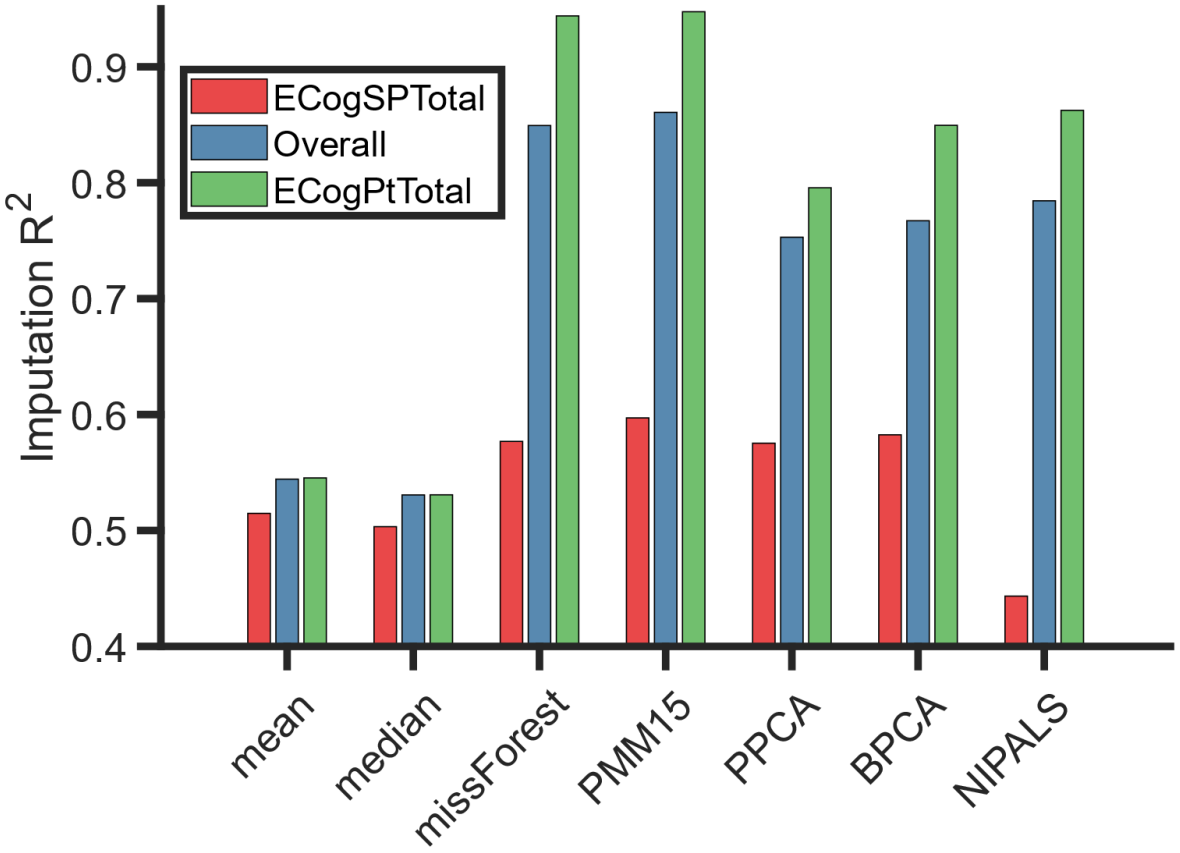
Missing Data Imputation Experiment on Dementia Data

- Artificial missing values introduced into CFA (cognitive and functional assessment) variables in ADNI (Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative) open source data.
- Missingness pattern introduced as observed in local memory clinic data:
  $P_{miss} = 0.48 \mp 0.06\ (MMSE)$ **(48% missing)**
- Dataset: 8 CFAs, Gender, Age, and Class Variable CD-RSB (Disease severity)
- Commonly used imputation methods and several PCA based methods tested. Imputed values of individual CFA features regressed against ground truth.

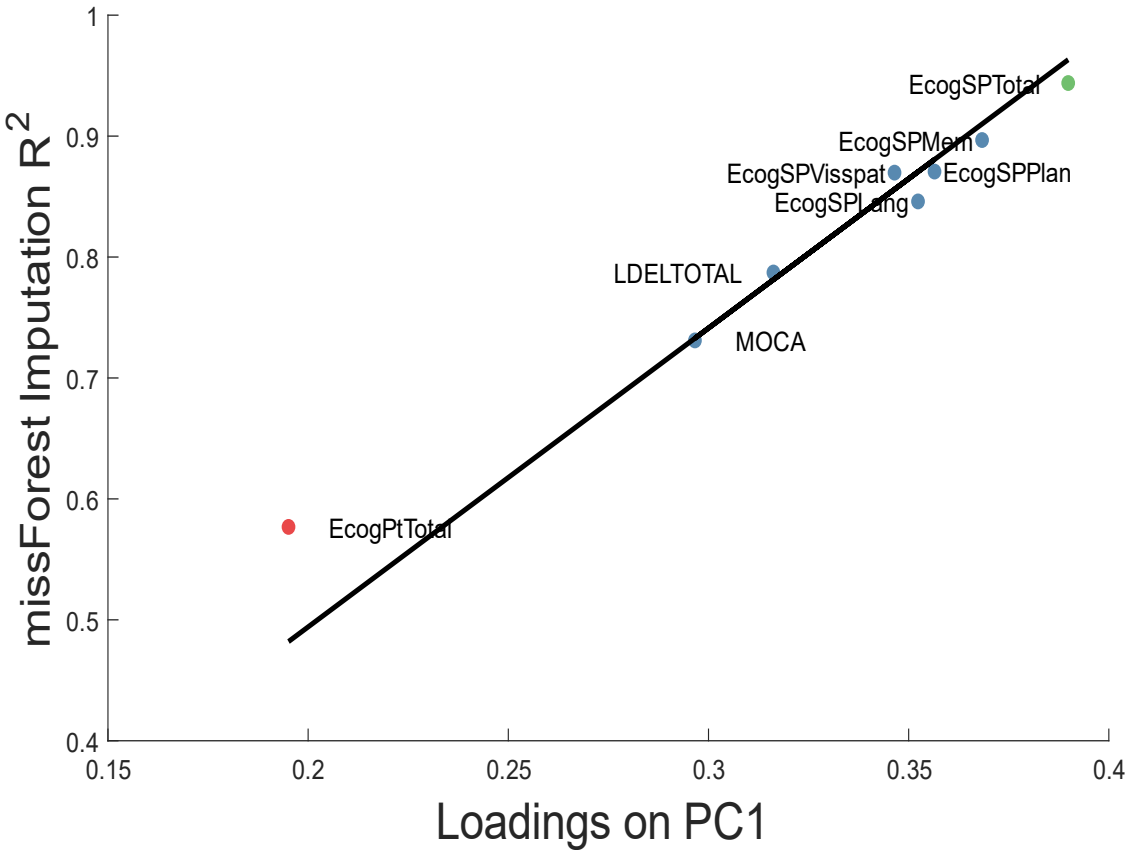
Motivation

- High degree of missingness in clinical data for dementia necessitates careful imputation.
- Little work considers imputability of different data features.
- Absence of ground truth in practical applications.



PCA loadings and missForest Feature Imputability

VARIABLE	PC1	PC2	PC3	R^2
CDR-SB	0.322	0.012	0.304	n/a
Gender	0.0719	-0.679	0.195	n/a
Age	0.079	-0.693	-0.303	n/a
EcogSPTotal	0.390	0.071	-0.194	0.862
EcogSPMem	0.368	0.045	-0.068	0.821
LDELTOTAL	-0.316	0.017	-0.296	0.775
EcogSPLang	0.352	0.0350	-0.148	0.763
MOCA	-0.297	0.144	-0.177	0.682
EcogSPPlan	0.356	0.103	-0.285	0.797
EcogSPVisspat	0.346	0.123	-0.306	0.791
EcogPtTotal	0.1959	0.0590	0.648	0.443



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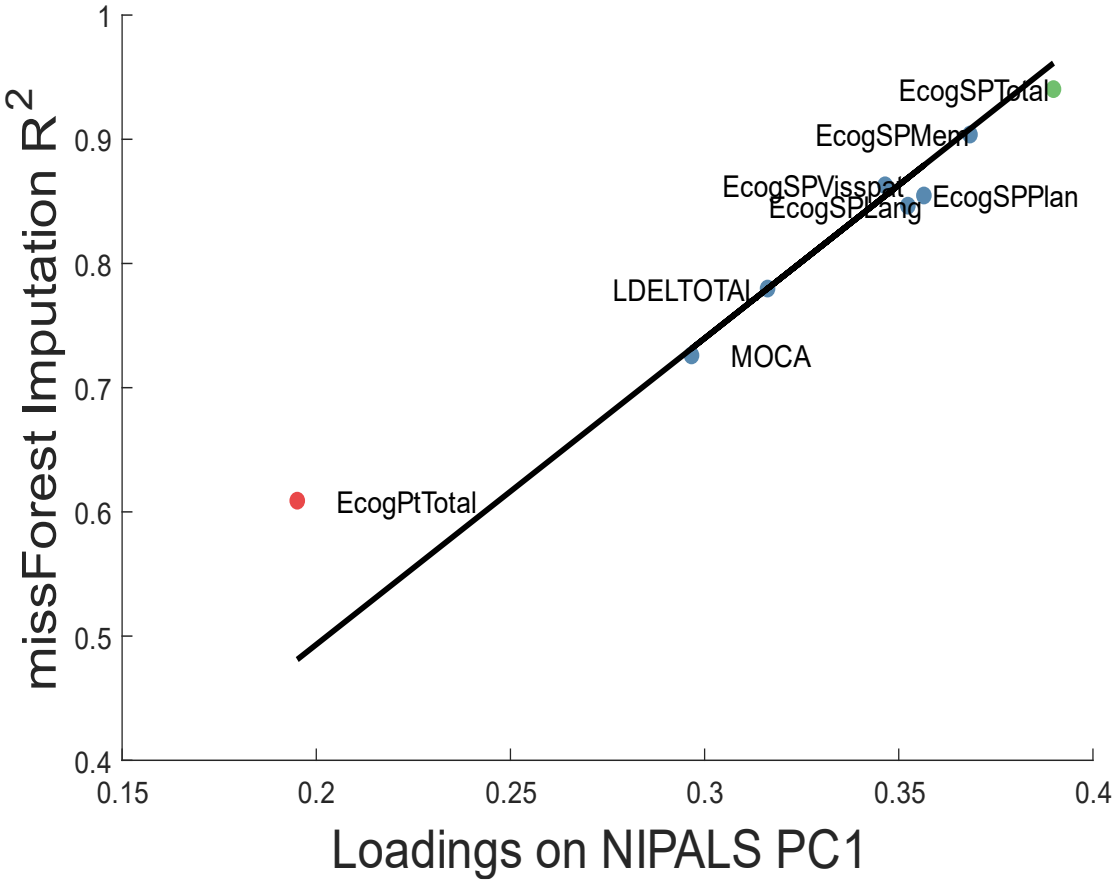

- **Summary:**
  - Feature imputation accuracy can be estimated even where missingness is very high and ground truth unknown
  - Informing further analysis and intuitive interpetability of imputed datasets
  - **Potential groundwork for new missing data strategies.**
- Implications
  - Should less imputable features be omitted from ongoing analysis?
    - Orthogonality considerations
- Further work
  - Explore different PC structures & types of missingness
  - Experiment with workflows which explicitly consider feature imputability