

An Analytical Review of Machine Learning Methodologies

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Abstract

Machine Learning (ML) is a dynamic and rapidly developing area of computer science that enables the system to learn from data and improve its performance without clear programs. Rooted in statistical theory and computer algorithms, ML has become a major technology that progresses in artificial intelligence. It strengthens the detection of the recommendations and speech for extensive applications from autonomous vehicles and medical diagnoses. This paper has reviewed the basics of machine learning, including its historical development, major algorithms and major applications. The evolution of machine learning, which includes deep learning and neural networks, begins with the basic theory of the theorem and the minimum square method, significantly contributed to by pioneers such as Allen Turing and Arthur Samuel. While the machine is shaping the learning industries and affecting daily life, it is important to understand its main principles and paths to navigate the future of intelligent systems.

Keyword: Artificial intelligence, machine learning, reinforcement learning, supervised learning, unsupervised learning.

INTRODUCTION

What is Machine Learning?

Machine learning is the process of instructing a computer to optimize performance criteria based on sample data or previous experience. You begin with a model that has certain adjustable parameters, and learning involves using a computer program to tune these parameters based on training data or prior experience. The model may be predictive, forecasting future outcomes, descriptive, extracting knowledge from data, or a combination of both [1].

Arthur Samuel, an early American pioneer in computer gaming and artificial intelligence at IBM, introduced the term “machine learning” in 1979. He defined machine learning as a discipline that allows computers to learn and improve without being directly programmed.

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Received Date: February 10, 2026
Accepted Date: February 26, 2026
Published Date: March 10, 2026

Citation: Nitin S. Shirirao, Sarita B. Patil, Dnyaneshwar S. Jadhav. An Analytical Review of Machine Learning Methodologies. Recent Trends in Mathematics. 2026; 3(1): 13–21p.

However, there is no universally agreed-upon definition of machine learning, since different researchers and authors explain the concept in different ways [2].

Definition of Learning

Definition

Computer program is considered to have learned from experience E if its performance on a set of tasks T, measured by performance metric P, improves as it gains more experience E.

Examples**Email Spam Filter**

- *Task (T)*: Sorting emails into “spam” or “not spam” categories
- *Performance Measure (P)*: Classification accuracy (the proportion of emails labeled correctly)
- *Experience (E)*: The system learns from a collection of emails that have already been marked as spam or not spam.

Self-Driving Car

- *Experience (E)*: Driving information gathered from real-world roads, such as camera images, sensor data, and the steering or braking actions performed by human drivers.
- *Task (T)*: Operating a vehicle autonomously on public roads, including maintaining lane position, obeying traffic signals, and avoiding obstacles.
- *Performance Measure (P)*: The total distance driven safely without human assistance or the rate of driving mistakes per mile [3].

Definition

It is the field of study that gives Computers the capability to learn without being explicitly programmed.

COMPONENTS OF LEARNING**Basic Components of Learning Process**

Data storage, abstraction, generalization, and evaluation are the four main parts of learning, whether it is done by a machine or a human. The different elements and steps that make up the learning process are depicted in Figure 1.

Data Storage

- The ability to store and retrieve large amounts of data is a crucial part of the learning process.
- Humans and computers are same in utilizing data storage as a foundation for advanced reasoning.
- In humans, the data is stored in the brain and data is retrieved using electrochemical signal.
- Computers store data using devices such as hard disk drives, flash memory, random access memory, and other similar technologies.

Abstraction

- The second element of the learning process is referred to as abstraction.
- Abstraction is the process of deriving meaningful knowledge from stored data.
- This involves forming general concepts that represent the data as a whole.
- The creation of knowledge involves application of know models and creation of new models.
- The process of adjusting a model to fit a dataset is called training.
- Once the model has been trained, the data is transformed into an abstract form that captures and summarizes the original information.

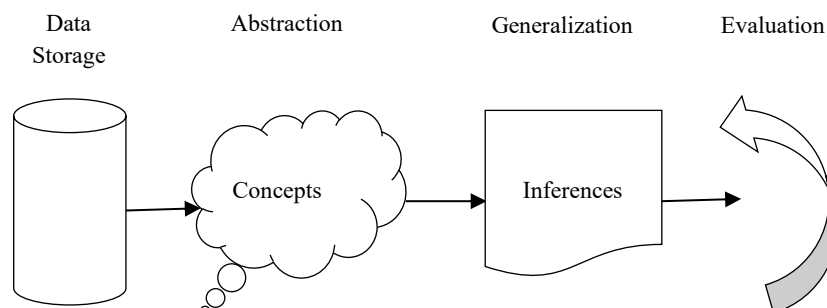


Figure 1. Process of machine learning.

Generalization

- The third learning of the learning process is known as generalization.
- The term generalization describes the process of turning the knowledge about stored data into a form that can be utilized for future action.
- In generalization, the goal is discovered those properties of the data that will be most relevant to future task.

Evaluation

- Evaluation is the final step in the learning process.
- It is the process through which feedback is given to evaluate the practical value of the knowledge gained.

Such feedback is subsequently utilized to inform and enhance the entire learning process.

TYPES OF MACHINE LEARNING

Machine learning is generally categorized into three distinct types.

1. *Supervised Learning*: Supervised learning, often referred to as predictive learning, involves training a machine to classify unseen data based on known input-output pairs from similar objects.
2. *Unsupervised learning*: Unsupervised learning, also known as descriptive learning, involves identifying hidden patterns or structures in data by clustering similar items, without the need for prior labeling.
3. *Reinforcement learning*: Reinforcement learning involves training a machine to autonomously make decisions through trial and error, guided by rewards or penalties, in order to accomplish defined objectives (Figure 2).

Supervised Learning

Supervised learning is a machine learning approach in which an algorithm learns the relationship between inputs and their correct outputs by analyzing example pairs. In this process, the model is trained on labeled data, where each input is matched with its corresponding output. During training, the algorithm detects and learns the patterns that connect inputs to their respective outputs [4, 5].

The objective of supervised learning is to develop a model that can accurately predict outcomes for new, unseen data by applying patterns learned from the training examples (Figure 3).

Figure 3 shows the supervised learning technique. The input consists of labeled training data with history information included. The machine creates a prediction model using the information provided, which may subsequently be used to test data to give each record a label [6].

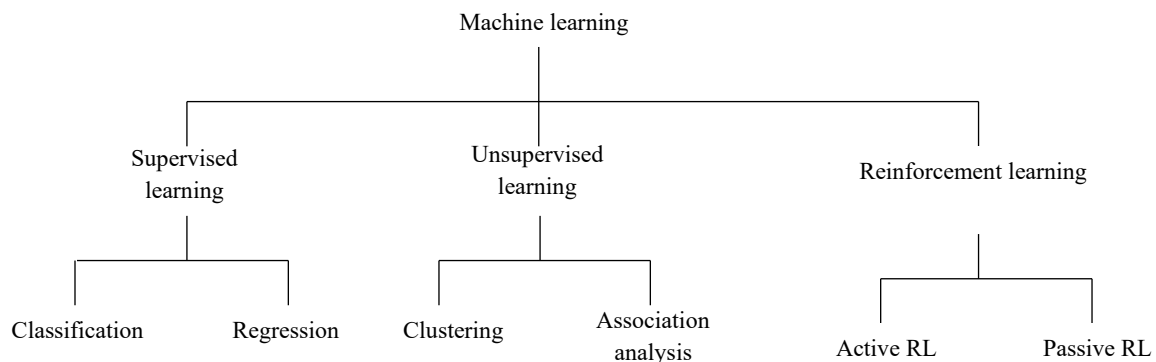


Figure 2. Types of machine learning.

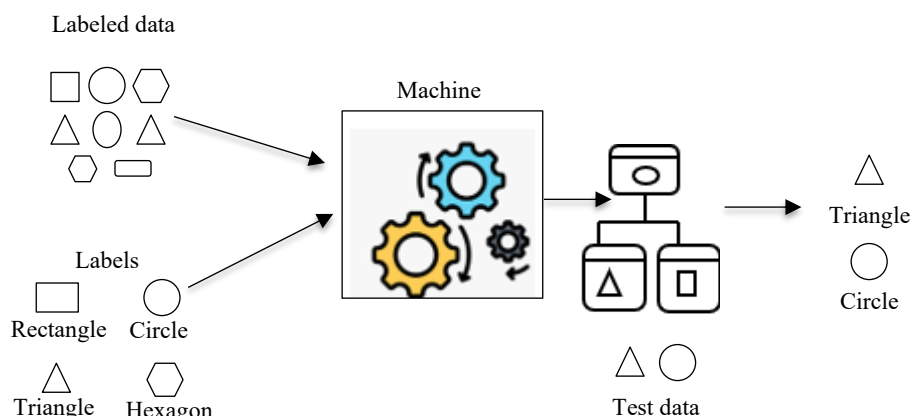


Figure 3. Supervised machine learning.

Classification

A classification algorithm is a form of supervised machine learning. It is used to assign new observations to specific categories based on patterns learned from training data. Essentially, it works like teaching a computer to sort new data into well-defined groups. After learning from an existing dataset, the computer categorizes new observations into different groups or classes, such as Yes or No, Spam or Not Spam, 0 or 1, and so on. These classes are also referred to as labels, categories, or goals [7].

DIFFERENT CLASSIFICATION ALGORITHM

Logistic Regression

Logistic regression is a commonly used supervised machine learning algorithm designed for classification problems. It is used to estimate the classified dependent variables using a set of separate variables. Imagine that it determines whether it is "yes" or "no", but with one turn: it provides possible values in 0 and 1 instead of a simple binary result. This algorithm uses an S-shaped logistic function instead of a straight line to estimate the probability of outcomes. Therefore, it is well suited for binary classification problems, such as true/false, 0/1, or spam/non-spam decisions. Logistic regression is particularly effective when outcomes fall into distinct categories, making it a popular choice for applications like email filtering and credit scoring.

Decision Trees

Decision Tree is a tree-structured classifier where the internal nodes show the characteristics of the dataset, show branch decision rules, and show the results of leaf nodes. It functions like a comprehensive flowchart that leads you through a sequence of choices determined by the dataset's characteristics. In a decision tree, there are two main types of nodes: decision nodes and leaf nodes. Decision nodes represent points where choices are made and branch into multiple paths, while leaf nodes indicate the final outcome and have no further branches.

The decisions or tests are derived from the dataset's features, producing a visual structure that illustrates all possible outcomes for a particular problem. A decision tree is considered one of the most effective classification methods in machine learning, as it simplifies complex decision-making and offers a clear and intuitive path from data to conclusions.

Random Forests

Random forests are a widely used machine learning method capable of handling both classification and regression tasks. They rely on ensemble learning, a technique that combines multiple models to produce improved outcomes. You can think of a random forest as a group of decision trees where each tree makes its own prediction, and the final result is determined by the majority vote. This approach increases accuracy and enhances the model's overall reliability.

This method helps improve accuracy and reduces the likelihood of over fitting. Adding more trees typically increases performance, much like consulting several experts to make a more balanced decision.

Support Vector Machine

Support Vector Machines (SVMs) are robust and flexible supervised learning algorithms utilized for linear and nonlinear classification, regression, and outlier detection. They are especially useful for managing high-dimensional feature spaces and identifying complex relationships within data. Support Vector Machines (SVMs) operate by identifying the best hyperplane that maximizes the margin separating different classes in an N-dimensional feature space. Their precision and generalization capabilities make them well-suited for tasks such as text classification, image and face recognition, spam filtering, handwriting analysis, gene expression profiling, and anomaly detection.

Neural Networks

Neural networks, the core of deep learning, are computational systems inspired by the structure of the human brain. They are composed of several layers of connected artificial neurons that can learn intricate patterns by adjusting their weights in response to error signals. These models are especially effective at handling unstructured data and show robust ability to generalize across different situations. Applications include document summarization, facial recognition, anomaly detection, and generative tasks, where high-level abstraction and pattern recognition are essential [8,9].

Regression

Regression is a fundamental method in supervised machine learning that models and examines how a target variable depends on one or more input features. In contrast to classification, which assigns inputs to categories, regression is concerned with predicting continuous numeric values. It underpins many applications in fields such as economics, healthcare, environmental science, finance, and engineering. Regression is a method that uses mathematical models to describe the relationship between independent variables (X) and a dependent variable (Y).

Mathematical Form

$$\hat{Y} = wX + b$$

Where

- \hat{Y} Predicted output (target)
- b = bias intercepts
- w = weight (slope)

Given training data

Find Parameters (w & b)

From the data, marks increase by 10 for every additional hour (Table 1).

So:

$$w = 10$$

When $X = 0$, assume

$$\hat{Y} = 30 \Rightarrow b = 30$$

Table 1. Student Performance.

| Hours Studied (X) | Marks (Y) |
|-------------------|-----------|
| 1 | 30 |
| 2 | 40 |
| 3 | 50 |
| 4 | 60 |

Final Model

$$\hat{Y} = 10X + 30$$

Prediction

If a student studies 5 hours

$$\hat{Y} = 10(5) + 30 = 80$$

Predicted Marks: 80

Loss Function (Error Calculation)

To measure how good the model is, we use Mean Squared Error (MSE)

$$\text{MSE} = \frac{1}{n} \sum (Y - \hat{Y})^2$$

Example for $X=2$

- Actual $\hat{Y} = 50$
- Predicted $\hat{Y} = 10(2) + 30 = 50$

$$\text{Error} = (50 - 50)^2 = 0$$

Typical applications of regression include:

- Demand forecasting in retail
- Sales prediction for managers
- Price prediction in real estate
- Weather forecasting
- Skill demand forecasting in the job market

Unsupervised Learning

Unsupervised learning is a machine learning method in which the model is not given labeled data. It automatically groups similar data and discovers hidden patterns without human help.

- Unsupervised learning is applied to tasks like clustering, dimensionality reduction, and association rule discovery to find patterns in data without labels.
- It assists in uncovering hidden patterns and the underlying structure within the dataset.
- It is valuable for organizing data into groups, compressing data to reduce its size, and identifying unusual or abnormal patterns (Figure 4).

The image displays a collection of shapes—triangle, square, pentagon, and hexagon—representing raw data that an unsupervised learning algorithm will analyze.

- The interpretation stage involves the algorithm working without predefined labels or categories, organizing and grouping data by identifying natural patterns.
- The algorithm demonstrates an unsupervised learning method that uncovers patterns within the data.

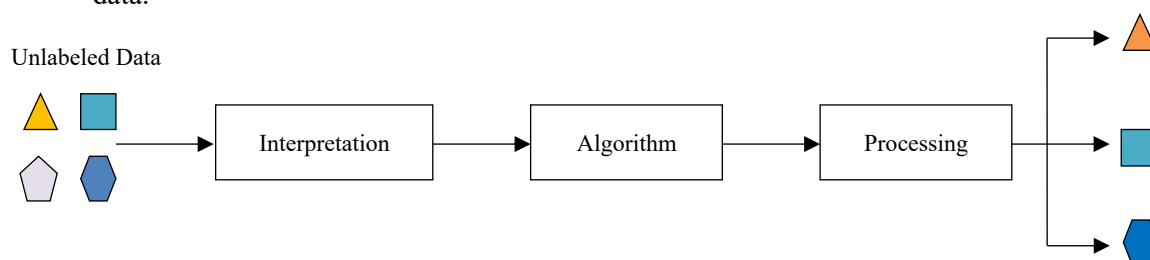


Figure 4. Unsupervised machine learning.

During the processing stage, the algorithm analyzes the input data to identify meaningful patterns. There are mainly three types of unsupervised learning algorithms as follows:

Clustering Algorithm

Clustering is an unsupervised learning technique that groups unlabeled data into clusters according to similarity, allowing hidden patterns or relationships to be identified without using predefined labels.

Clustering Key Points

- Group's data points with similar features.
- Finds natural groupings in unlabeled data.
- Commonly used for:
 - Customer segmentation
 - Anomaly detection
 - Data organization
- Operates without output labels.
- Helps understand data structure for analysis or decisions.

Some Common Clustering Algorithms

1. K-Means clustering is an unsupervised learning method that divides data into K clusters by grouping points that are close to each other, helping to identify patterns in unlabeled data.
2. Hierarchical clustering is an unsupervised learning technique that forms clusters by progressively merging or splitting groups, resulting in a tree-like structure called a dendrogram.
3. DBSCAN is an unsupervised learning method that detects clusters by analyzing data density, grouping closely packed points together and labeling isolated or sparse points as noise. Mean-Shift clustering is an unsupervised learning method that identifies clusters by iteratively shifting data points toward regions with the highest density, helping reveal natural groupings.
4. Spectral Clustering is an unsupervised learning method that identifies clusters by representing data as a graph and grouping points based on their connections.
5. *Association Rule Learning*: Association rule learning is an unsupervised technique that identifies relationships within large datasets by generating “if-then” rules, showing how the occurrence of certain items suggests the occurrence of others [10].

Association Rule Learning Key Points

- Finds frequent item sets and their relationships
- Used in market basket analysis
- Supports promotions and cross-selling

Some common Association Rule Learning Algorithms

1. The Apriori algorithm is an unsupervised learning method that identifies patterns in data by systematically exploring frequent item combinations.
2. The FP-Growth algorithm is an efficient unsupervised learning method that identifies frequent patterns quickly, avoiding the candidate generation process used in Apriori.
3. The Eclat algorithm is an unsupervised learning method that identifies frequent patterns efficiently by intersecting item sets instead of generating candidate sets.
4. Efficient Tree-based algorithms are unsupervised learning methods that scale to large datasets by structuring data in trees, enabling quick identification of patterns.

Dimensionality Reduction

- Dimensionality reduction is a method used to reduce the number of variables or features in a dataset, making analysis and visualization easier while enhancing algorithm performance and minimizing noise.

- Dimensionality reduction decreases the feature space from high dimensions to fewer, more meaningful dimensions, making data easier to analyze and visualize.
- Dimensionality reduction helps focus on the most significant features or patterns, removing less important information to simplify analysis.
- Dimensionality reduction helps improve the efficiency of machine learning models and reduces overfitting by removing irrelevant or redundant features.

SOME COMMON POPULAR DIMENSIONALITY REDUCTION ALGORITHMS

Principal Component Analysis (PCA)

A statistical technique that reduces dimensionality by projecting data onto a new set of orthogonal, uncorrelated principal components that retain maximum variance.

Linear Discriminant Analysis (LDA)

A supervised dimensionality reduction technique that enhances class distinction by mapping data into a lower-dimensional space.

Non-negative Matrix Factorization (NMF)

A matrix decomposition technique that represents data as a product of non-negative matrices, enabling parts-based and interpretable representations.

Locally Linear Embedding (LLE)

A nonlinear dimensionality reduction algorithm that preserves local neighborhood structures by maintaining linear relationships among nearby data points.

Isomap

A nonlinear manifold learning technique that captures the global geometric structure of data by preserving geodesic distances along the manifold.

Reinforcement Learning:

Reinforcement Learning (RL) is a branch of machine learning where an agent interacts with its environment and improves its decisions over time through trial and error, aiming to maximize the cumulative reward.

Key Concepts

- *Agent*: The learner or decision-maker (e.g., a robot, software program).
- *Environment*: Everything the agent interacts with.
- *State (S)*: The current situation of the agent.
- *Action (A)*: A decision or move taken by the agent.
- *Reward (R)*: Feedback received after taking an action.
- *Policy (π)*: A strategy that defines which action to take in a given state (Figure 5).

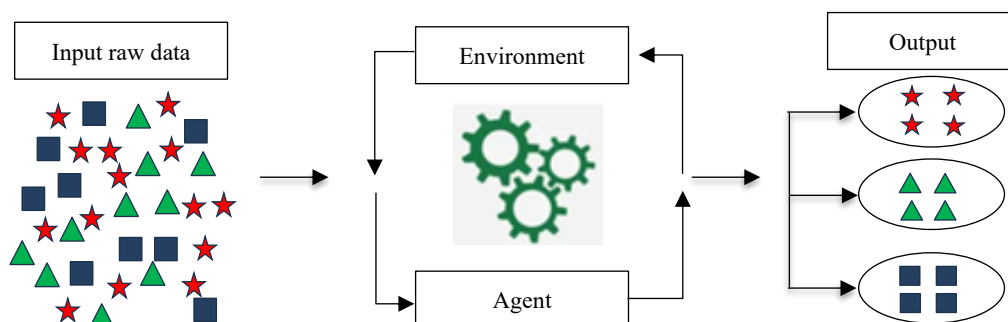


Figure 5. Reinforcement machine learning.

Reinforcement Learning is a paradigm in which an agent (learner or decision-maker) interacts with an environment by performing actions and receiving feedback, with the objective of achieving a goal and optimizing decision-making over time.

- *Agent*: The Agent is the decision-maker that performs actions within the environment..
- *Environment*: The environment is the world or system in which the agent operates.
- *State*: The state represents the situation or condition in which the agent currently exists.
- *Action*: Actions refer to the possible moves or decisions that the agent can take.
- *Reward*: The reward is the feedback or outcome provided by the environment in response to the agent's action.

CONCLUSION

Machine learning has emerged as a transformative discipline in computer science, enabling systems to extract meaningful patterns from data and improve performance autonomously. This analytical review highlights the evolution of machine learning, from foundational algorithms such as supervised and unsupervised learning to advanced techniques like reinforcement learning and deep learning. Every machine learning methodology has its own advantages and drawbacks, which determine its suitability for different applications such as healthcare, finance, autonomous technologies, and natural language processing. The comparison highlights the need to choose algorithms carefully by considering the nature of the data, available computational power, and the intended results. As the field of machine learning advances, upcoming research will likely emphasize better model interpretability, bias reduction, and improved scalability. In general, a comprehensive understanding of various machine learning approaches enables researchers and practitioners to develop effective, dependable, and innovative solutions for challenging real-world tasks.

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