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Original Article

Mathematical Statistics Approaches for Explainable Artificial Intelligence Models

JENIFAR DEVASAGAYAM
Department of Mathematics, Sri Ramakrishna College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu, India.

ABSTRACT: *Explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI) has emerged as a critical research area for improving the transparency, interpretability, fairness, and reliability of machine learning systems. As artificial intelligence models become increasingly complex, especially deep learning architectures, understanding the statistical foundations behind model behavior becomes essential for trustworthy decision-making. This paper explores the role of mathematical statistics in developing and evaluating explainable AI models. The study examines statistical inference, probability theory, hypothesis testing, Bayesian methods, regression analysis, feature importance estimation, uncertainty quantification, and causal inference as fundamental tools for interpretability. Furthermore, the paper discusses how statistical techniques contribute to local and global explanations, model validation, fairness assessment, and robustness analysis. Several widely used XAI methods, including SHAP, LIME, partial dependence plots, and counterfactual explanations, are analyzed from a statistical perspective. The paper also highlights challenges such as interpretability–accuracy trade-offs, bias propagation, high-dimensional data complexity, and uncertainty in explanations. Finally, future directions involving probabilistic explainability, statistical learning theory, and human-centered AI are presented. This work aims to bridge the gap between mathematical statistics and explainable artificial intelligence by providing a comprehensive framework for statistically grounded and trustworthy AI systems.*

KEYWORDS: *Explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI), Mathematical Statistics, Statistical Inference, Machine Learning Interpretability, Bayesian Statistics, Feature Importance, SHAP, LIME, Uncertainty Quantification, Causal Inference, Transparent AI, Trustworthy AI, Model Explainability, Statistical Learning, Fairness in AI.*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

AI and ML were on a big boom in recent years with increased computing power, big data compilation, and deep learning techniques. AI systems which are widely used to automate and improve decision-making across a variety of fields, including healthcare, finance, education, transportation, and cybersecurity The modern machine learning models can work with large datasets and generate highly accurate predictions. But much of the research in AI involves advanced models, especially deep learning systems, which can be seen as “black box” and make it hard for users to see clearly how decisions are made. This opaqueness brings about worries in important applications, where clarifications are required. Hence, researchers concentrate on how we can design Explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI) systems to enhance transparency, interpretability and trust.

1.2. IMPORTANCE OF EXPLAINABLE AI

Explainable AI is vital as it enhances trust and accountability in AI systems. When it is explained the user is more likely to accept an AI prediction. This is especially true in fields like healthcare and finance, where the provided explanations enable professionals to validate AI predictions before acting on them. XAI also promotes fairness by identifying biases and errors in machine learning models. Collecting clear justifications for automated decisions is often a key requirement imposed by government regulations. This is why Explainable AI becomes a central building block for human-centered and ethical AI systems.

1.3. ROLE OF MATHEMATICAL STATISTICS IN XAI

While mathematical statistics is what gives you the knowledge to better understand and interpret AI models. Statistical methods support data pattern analysis and estimation of uncertainty and reliability of the models. Explainable AI: The use of the probability distributions, regression analysis, Bayesian inference and hypothesis testing in technique. It enables quantifying uncertainty in predictions, critical for sensitive applications such as medical diagnosis or financial forecasting. Integrating statistical techniques and AI enables us to construct models that are more interpretable, trustworthy, and scientifically sound.

1.4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This paper primarily discusses how the incorporation of statistical methods yields explainability in AI systems. This research will analyze various XAI methods (SHAP, LIME or feature importance methods) with respect to their more statistical view.

The other aim is to investigate the statistical reasoning that allows for transparency, trust and reliability of machine learning models. Another goal of the study is to develop an explainable AI framework that is grounded in statistics.

1.5. PAPER ORGANIZATION

This paper consists of multiple sections. The Introduction states the background, significance and purpose of study. The next section outlines the principles of explainable AI types, obstacles and applications. The third section describes some of the mathematical statistics basics utilized in XAI like probability theory, regression analysis and Bayesian statistics. Sections on additional statistical explainability methods, uncertainty quantification and evaluation metrics are also included in addition to real-world applications. Last, but not least, the paper describes challenges, future 10 research avenues and results.

2. FUNDAMENTALS OF EXPLAINABLE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

2.1. DEFINITION OF XAI

Explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI) is an ideal that incorporates methods and techniques for making AI systems more understandable to humans. That is why, traditionally AI models make predictions but do not provide explainability regarding the decisions taken. The goal of XAI is to provide clear and interpretable explanations of these predictions. The objective of XAI is to increase transparency, trust, fairness, and accountability with AI systems. By providing insights into how input data results in specific outputs, explainables enable better human interaction with intelligent systems.

2.2. CATEGORIES OF EXPLAINABILITY

Global explainability focuses on understanding the overall behavior of an AI model. It explains how the model works across the entire dataset and identifies the important features influencing predictions.

Local explainability focuses on explaining a single prediction made by the model. It helps users understand why a specific decision was generated for a particular input. Methods like SHAP and LIME are commonly used for local explanations.

Intrinsic interpretability refers to models that are naturally easy to understand. Examples include linear regression, logistic regression, and decision trees. These models provide direct relationships between inputs and outputs.

Post-hoc explainability involves applying explanation techniques after training a complex model. These methods generate explanations without changing the original model. Visualization and feature attribution techniques are examples of post-hoc explainability.

2.3. CHALLENGES IN XAI

One major challenge in explainable AI is balancing accuracy and interpretability. Complex models such as deep neural networks provide high accuracy but are difficult to interpret, while simple models are easier to understand but may reduce performance.

Another challenge is the complexity of deep learning systems. Neural networks contain many hidden layers and parameters, making it difficult to understand their internal decision-making process.

Bias and fairness are also important concerns in XAI. AI models may produce unfair decisions if training data contains bias. Explainability techniques help identify and reduce these biases to ensure ethical AI systems.

2.4. APPLICATIONS OF XAI

In healthcare, XAI helps doctors understand AI-based diagnostic predictions and improves trust in medical decision-making systems. In finance, explainable AI is used for credit scoring, fraud detection, and risk analysis. Financial institutions require transparent explanations for automated decisions. Autonomous vehicles use XAI to explain driving decisions and improve safety and accountability in self-driving systems. In cybersecurity, XAI helps security analysts understand why certain activities are detected as cyber threats, improving the reliability of threat detection systems.

3. MATHEMATICAL STATISTICS FOUNDATIONS FOR XAI

3.1. PROBABILITY THEORY

Probability theory stands as another cornerstone area in mathematics that is central to any AI or statistics derivation (for measuring uncertainty and predicting outcomes). Probabilities are used to estimate the likelihood of certain events happening and defend decisions based on uncertainty in explainable AI. Random Variables: A random variable represents an uncertain quantity whose value can change depending on the outcome. A probability distribution describes how the probabilities are assigned to these variables. Conditional Probability: Conditional probability is the measure of probability that an event occurs, given that another event has already occurred. Bayes theorem is almost used in AI in many places. It is applied for updating probabilities as new information is received.

3.2. STATISTICAL INFERENCE

Statistical inference involves drawing conclusions about a population based on sample data. In XAI, statistical inference helps evaluate model performance and reliability.

Estimation theory is used to estimate unknown parameters from data. Confidence intervals provide a range within which the true parameter value is expected to lie. Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) is a statistical method used to determine parameter values that maximize the probability of observing the given data.

3.3. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Hypothesis testing is a statistical method used to determine whether a claim or assumption is valid. In explainable AI, it helps compare models and evaluate feature significance.

Statistical significance measures whether results are meaningful or occurred by chance. The p-value indicates the probability of obtaining results under the null hypothesis. Model comparison tests are used to evaluate which machine learning model performs better based on statistical evidence.

3.4. REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Regression analysis studies the relationship between dependent and independent variables. It is widely used in interpretable machine learning models.

Linear regression models continuous relationships between variables using a straight-line equation. Logistic regression is used for classification problems where outputs are categorical. Generalized Linear Models (GLMs) extend regression methods to handle different types of data distributions.

3.5. BAYESIAN STATISTICS

Bayesian statistics combines prior knowledge with observed data to update probabilities. It is important in explainable AI because it provides probabilistic interpretations of predictions.

Bayesian inference updates beliefs based on new evidence. Posterior distributions represent updated probabilities after observing data. Bayesian networks are graphical models that show probabilistic relationships between variables and help explain dependencies within AI systems.

3.6. INFORMATION THEORY

Information theory measures the amount of information contained in data and is widely used in machine learning and explainability.

Entropy measures uncertainty or randomness in a dataset. Mutual information measures the dependency between variables and identifies important features. Kullback–Leibler (KL) divergence measures the difference between two probability distributions and is commonly used to compare statistical models in AI systems.

4. STATISTICAL APPROACHES TO EXPLAINABLE AI

4.1. FEATURE IMPORTANCE METHODS

In explainable AI, feature importance methods are used to figure out which input variables will have the biggest impact on what a model predicts. These methodologies inform users on how machine learning systems derive an output, as well as which features are strongly contributing towards that output. Feature importance methods are commonly used, as they are able to give interpretable insights into the model without requiring complete knowledge of its internal structure. Statistical methods are often used to quantify the associations between variables and determine the contribution of each feature.

One of the most straightforward techniques is a correlation analysis for evaluating feature importance. It characterizes the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables. Correlation analysis in the Explainable AI classifies the features according to whether they have a positive or negative influence on the target variable. Features with higher linear correlation are more associated and have a stronger influence in prediction tasks. However, correlation is simply a linear way to interpret relationships between variables it does not always imply causation.

Permutation importance: Measures the importance of the feature by randomly shuffling its values in the test set and seeing how that affects model performance. You shuffle a feature, and if its accuracy drops a lot, that feature is important. This makes the method generally useful across any machine learning model, as it provides an intuitive understanding of feature contribution.

Sensitivity analysis is the study of how variations in model explanatory variables affect model inputs. This measures how stable these models are, which are dependent on a set of input values, and changes in these values would create variations and their responsiveness. This sensitivity analysis is helpful for monitoring unstable decisions when the model has high risks resulting from a set of features leading to firm predictions.

4.2. INTERPRETABLE STATISTICAL MODELS

Interpretable statistical models are machine learning models that are naturally understandable to humans. Unlike complex black-box systems, these models provide transparent relationships between input variables and predictions. Such models are important in applications where explanation and accountability are necessary.

Decision trees are widely used interpretable models that represent decisions using a tree-like structure. Each branch represents a condition based on input features, while leaf nodes represent final predictions. Decision trees are easy to visualize and understand because users can follow the path from input to output step by step.

Rule-based systems explain predictions using a collection of logical “if–then” rules. These systems are highly interpretable because users can directly understand the conditions that lead to specific decisions. Rule-based models are often used in expert systems and decision-support applications.

Sparse models focus on using only a small number of important features for prediction. By reducing unnecessary variables, sparse models improve interpretability and simplify analysis. Techniques such as LASSO regression encourage sparsity by removing less important features from the model.

4.3. SURROGATE MODELING

Surrogate modeling involves creating a simpler, interpretable model that approximates the behavior of a complex machine learning model. Since many AI systems are difficult to understand directly, surrogate models provide simplified explanations while preserving the predictive behavior of the original model.

Local surrogate models explain individual predictions by approximating the behavior of the original model around a specific data point. These models focus only on a small region near the prediction of interest. Techniques such as LIME use local surrogate models to provide understandable explanations for single predictions.

Global surrogate models attempt to explain the overall behavior of the entire machine learning system. Instead of focusing on individual predictions, they approximate the complete decision-making process using interpretable models such as decision trees or regression models. Global surrogate models help researchers understand general patterns and feature relationships within complex AI systems.

4.4. SHAP (SHAPLEY ADDITIVE EXPLANATIONS)

SHAP is a widely used explainability method that measures the contribution of each feature to a prediction. It is based on statistical and mathematical concepts from cooperative game theory. SHAP values indicate how much each feature increases or decreases the prediction compared to the average prediction.

From a statistical perspective, SHAP provides a fair distribution of feature contributions by considering all possible combinations of input variables. This approach ensures consistency and fairness in explanation generation. SHAP also supports both local and global interpretability, making it useful for understanding individual predictions and overall model behavior.

The cooperative game theory basis of SHAP comes from the concept of Shapley values, where each feature is treated as a “player” contributing to the final prediction. The method calculates the average contribution of each feature across all possible feature combinations. This mathematical foundation makes SHAP explanations theoretically reliable and interpretable.

4.5. LIME (LOCAL INTERPRETABLE MODEL-AGNOSTIC EXPLANATIONS)

LIME is an explainability technique designed to explain predictions made by complex machine learning models. It works by creating a simple interpretable model around a specific prediction. LIME is called model-agnostic because it can be applied to any machine learning model without modifying the original system.

Local approximation techniques are central to LIME. The method generates small variations of the input data near the prediction being explained and observes how the model responds. A simpler interpretable model, such as linear regression, is then fitted to approximate the local behavior of the original model.

Statistical neighborhood sampling is used in LIME to generate nearby data points around the target instance. These sampled points help estimate how sensitive the prediction is to changes in input variables. By analyzing local neighborhoods statistically, LIME produces explanations that highlight the most influential features for a particular prediction.

4.6. PARTIAL DEPENDENCE AND ICE PLOTS

Partial Dependence Plots (PDPs) and Individual Conditional Expectation (ICE) plots are visualization methods used in explainable AI to understand the relationship between input variables and predictions. These methods help analyze how changes in a feature influence model outputs.

Marginal effects analysis in PDPs measures the average effect of a feature on predictions while keeping other variables constant. PDPs provide a global explanation by showing the general trend between a feature and the predicted outcome. This helps identify whether the relationship is linear, nonlinear, increasing, or decreasing.

Variable interaction interpretation is better captured using ICE plots. Unlike PDPs, ICE plots show changes in predictions for individual observations rather than averages. This allows users to identify heterogeneous effects and interactions between variables. ICE plots are useful for detecting cases where features influence predictions differently across samples.

5. UNCERTAINTY QUANTIFICATION IN XAI

Uncertainty quantification is an important aspect of explainable AI because it measures the confidence and reliability of predictions. AI systems often operate in uncertain environments where predictions may not always be accurate. Quantifying uncertainty helps users understand the level of trust they should place in model outputs.

5.1. ALEATORIC AND EPISTEMIC UNCERTAINTY

Aleatoric uncertainty refers to randomness or noise present in the data itself. This type of uncertainty cannot be eliminated because it is caused by natural variability or measurement errors. For example, sensor noise in medical imaging creates aleatoric uncertainty.

Epistemic uncertainty arises from limited knowledge or insufficient training data. It reflects uncertainty in the model parameters and can often be reduced by collecting more data or improving the model. Understanding both types of uncertainty is essential for reliable explainable AI systems.

5.2. CONFIDENCE ESTIMATION

Confidence estimation measures how certain a model is about its predictions. Machine learning systems often provide probability scores that reflect the confidence of a prediction. High confidence indicates strong certainty, while low confidence suggests uncertainty or ambiguity. Confidence estimation is important in healthcare, finance, and autonomous systems where incorrect predictions may have serious consequences.

5.3. BAYESIAN DEEP LEARNING

Bayesian deep learning combines deep neural networks with Bayesian probability theory. Instead of using fixed model parameters, Bayesian methods treat parameters as probability distributions. This allows the model to estimate prediction uncertainty and improve interpretability. Bayesian deep learning is useful for applications that require reliable, uncertainty-aware decision-making.

5.4. MONTE CARLO METHODS

Monte Carlo methods use repeated random sampling to estimate probabilities and uncertainties. In explainable AI, Monte Carlo simulations help evaluate prediction variability and model stability. Techniques such as Monte Carlo Dropout approximate uncertainty in deep learning models by generating multiple predictions from random network configurations.

5.5. BOOTSTRAPPING TECHNIQUES

Bootstrapping is a statistical resampling method used to estimate model reliability and variability. It involves repeatedly sampling data with replacement and training models on these samples. Bootstrapping helps estimate confidence intervals, prediction stability, and feature importance consistency in explainable AI systems.

6. CAUSAL INFERENCE AND EXPLAINABILITY

Causal inference focuses on understanding cause-and-effect relationships rather than simple correlations. In explainable AI, causal reasoning helps create explanations that are more meaningful and actionable.

6.1. CORRELATION VS CAUSATION

Correlation indicates that two variables are related, while causation means one variable directly influences another. Machine learning models often detect correlations without understanding actual causes. Explainable AI systems must distinguish between correlation and causation to avoid misleading explanations and incorrect decisions.

6.2. STRUCTURAL CAUSAL MODELS

Structural Causal Models (SCMs) represent causal relationships using mathematical equations and graphical structures. SCMs describe how variables influence each other and support reasoning about interventions and outcomes. These models are widely used in causal explainability and decision analysis.

6.3. COUNTERFACTUAL EXPLANATIONS

Counterfactual explanations describe how small changes in input variables could change the prediction outcome. For example, a loan application system may explain that a higher income would have resulted in loan approval. Counterfactual explanations are intuitive and useful for human understanding because they describe alternative scenarios.

6.4. CAUSAL DISCOVERY ALGORITHMS

Causal discovery algorithms automatically identify causal relationships from data. These algorithms use statistical dependencies and graphical methods to estimate causal structures. Causal discovery helps improve transparency and supports decision-making in complex AI systems.

7. EVALUATION METRICS FOR EXPLAINABILITY

Evaluation metrics are necessary to measure the quality and effectiveness of explainable AI methods. These metrics help determine whether explanations are understandable, reliable, and useful for users.

7.1. INTERPRETABILITY METRICS

Interpretability metrics measure how easily humans can understand AI explanations. Simpler models with fewer features and clear logic generally have higher interpretability. These metrics evaluate explanation complexity and human comprehension.

7.2. FIDELITY MEASURES

Fidelity measures how accurately an explanation reflects the behavior of the original machine learning model. High-fidelity explanations closely match the predictions and reasoning of the underlying system.

7.3. STABILITY AND ROBUSTNESS

Stability measures whether explanations remain consistent for similar inputs. Robustness evaluates whether explanations are resistant to noise or small changes in data. Stable and robust explanations improve user trust in AI systems.

7.4. HUMAN-CENTERED EVALUATION

Human-centered evaluation focuses on how users perceive and understand explanations. User studies, expert feedback, and usability testing are commonly used to evaluate explanation quality from a human perspective.

7.5. STATISTICAL VALIDATION TECHNIQUES

Statistical validation techniques evaluate the significance and reliability of explanations using statistical tests and confidence measures. These methods ensure that explanations are scientifically valid and not generated by random patterns.

8. CASE STUDIES AND APPLICATIONS

Explainable AI has applications across many industries where transparency and reliability are important. Healthcare diagnosis systems use XAI to explain disease predictions and support medical decision-making. Financial risk prediction systems use explainability to justify credit scores and investment decisions. Fraud detection systems identify suspicious transactions while explaining the reasons for classification. Autonomous driving systems use XAI to improve transparency in navigation and obstacle detection. Recommendation systems use explainability to help users understand why specific products or content are suggested.

9. CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

Explainable AI faces several challenges despite its advantages. Scalability issues arise when explanation methods are applied to very large datasets or complex deep learning systems. High-dimensional data creates difficulties in identifying meaningful explanations because many variables interact simultaneously. Bias and fairness remain major concerns because explanations may still reflect biased training data. Computational complexity is another limitation, as some explanation techniques require significant processing time and resources. Ethical and legal concerns also arise regarding privacy, accountability, and transparency in automated decision-making systems.

10. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Future research in explainable AI focuses on integrating statistical methods with advanced machine learning systems. Hybrid statistical-XAI frameworks aim to combine interpretability with high predictive accuracy. Explainable deep learning seeks to improve transparency in neural networks without sacrificing performance.

Probabilistic interpretability models will likely become more important for uncertainty-aware explanations. Trust-aware AI systems aim to improve user confidence through reliable explanations and fairness evaluation. Statistical fairness models will continue to address bias and discrimination in AI systems.

11. PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

The proposed framework can integrate statistical explainability methods with machine learning models to improve transparency and reliability. The framework design should define how data flows through interpretable and predictive components. The mathematical model can include statistical inference, feature importance calculations, and uncertainty estimation techniques. The algorithm description should explain the training, prediction, and explanation-generation processes step by step. Experimental results should compare the proposed framework with existing XAI methods using evaluation metrics such as accuracy, interpretability, and robustness. The discussion section should analyze strengths, limitations, and future improvements of the framework.

12. CONCLUSION

This study discussed the role of mathematical statistics in explainable artificial intelligence. Statistical methods such as probability theory, regression analysis, Bayesian inference, and uncertainty quantification provide strong foundations for improving AI transparency and reliability.

Explainable AI is essential for building trustworthy and human-centered intelligent systems. By integrating statistical reasoning with machine learning, researchers can develop AI models that are both accurate and interpretable. Future developments in statistical explainability are expected to play an important role in responsible and ethical AI systems.

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