Policy Research Journal
ISSN (E): 3006-7030 ISSN (P) : 3006-7022 Volume 4, Issue 4, 2026

MACHINE LEARNING AND DEEP LEARNING APPROACHES FOR LARGE-SCALE DATA ANALYTICS AND INTELLIGENT DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEMS

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19657810

Keywords
intelligent decision support systems, machine learning, deep learning, large-scale analytics, Transformers, Graph Neural Networks, MLOps, explainable AI, predictive analytics, prescriptive analytics

Article History
Received: 19 February 2026
Accepted: 29 March 2026
Published: 20 April 2026

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Abstract

The integration of Machine Learning (ML) and Deep Learning (DL) into Intelligent Decision Support Systems (IDSS) has fundamentally transformed large-scale data analytics by enabling automated pattern recognition, predictive modeling, and prescriptive recommendations in high-velocity, high-dimensional environments. Traditional rule-based or statistical DSS are increasingly supplemented or replaced by hybrid architectures that combine supervised (SVM, Random Forest, XGBoost), unsupervised (K-Means, PCA), semi-supervised, and reinforcement learning techniques with advanced DL models (CNNs, LSTMs, Transformers, GNNs) and physics-informed approaches. These systems excel in handling unstructured and relational data through self-attention mechanisms, graph-based relational learning, and edge computing for real-time inference, achieving benchmark accuracies of 91–98% across domains such as healthcare diagnostics, financial fraud detection, smart manufacturing (predictive maintenance), and urban planning (energy optimization, traffic management). Key architectural evolutions from Lambda/Kappa to Data Lakehouse and Data Fabric support scalable MLOps pipelines, while emerging trends like AutoML, Small Language Models, Sparse Models, and Quantum ML promise further democratization and efficiency gains. Critical challenges include data quality and silos, model interpretability (addressed by XAI techniques such as SHAP), algorithmic bias, privacy concerns (mitigated by Federated Learning), and the "black-box" nature of deep models in high-stakes decisions. Sector-specific case studies demonstrate substantial improvements in decision accuracy (up to 22%), latency reduction (up to 30%), and operational efficiency. Future trajectories emphasize hybrid neuro-symbolic systems, edge AI for low-latency applications, and ethical governance frameworks to ensure responsible deployment. Overall, ML/DL-driven IDSS represent a powerful paradigm for turning big data into actionable intelligence, driving competitive advantage and societal benefit in an increasingly data-centric world.

1. INTRODUCTION

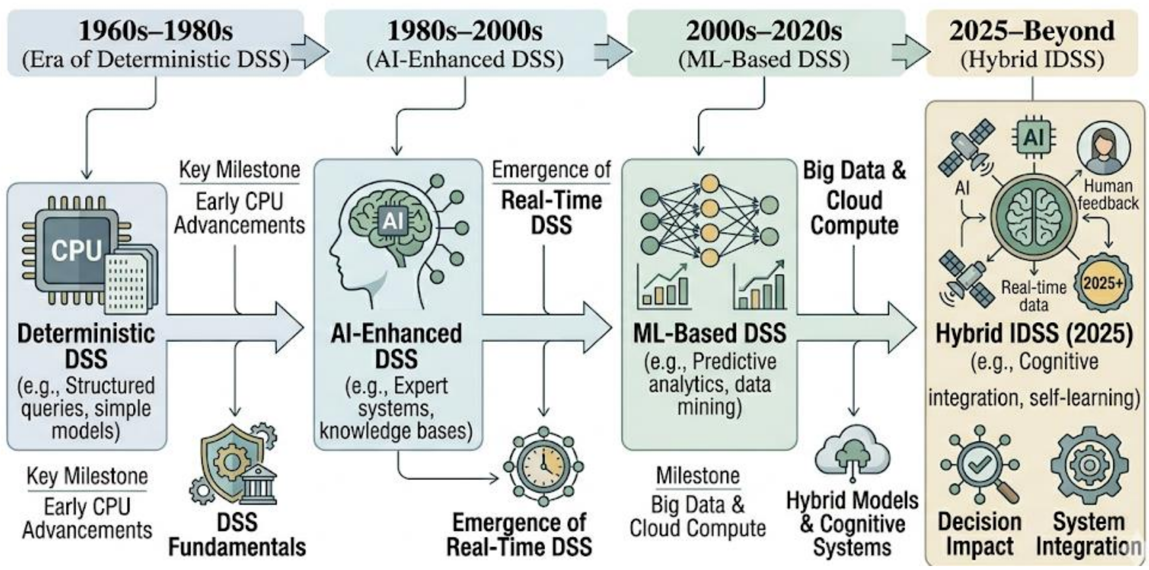
The integration of Machine Learning (ML) and Deep Learning (DL) into the architectural fabric of Intelligent Decision Support Systems (IDSS) marks a definitive epoch in the evolution of computational intelligence (Chen & Zhang, 2025). In the current landscape of 2025, where global data creation is characterized by unprecedented velocity and variety, traditional decision-making frameworks have become increasingly obsolete (Tariq & Rafi, 2025). The transition from static, rule-based Decision Support Systems (DSS) to dynamic, autonomous IDSS is driven by the necessity to extract actionable insights from vast, multi-dimensional datasets that exceed the processing capabilities of conventional database management systems (Srivastava & Gupta, 2025; Alghareeb et al., 2025). This review examines the sophisticated methodologies, architectural patterns, and practical implementations of modern ML and DL within large-scale analytics, providing a comprehensive roadmap for researchers and practitioners navigating the complexities of high-velocity data environments (Li et al., 2025).

2. Historical Trajectory and the Shift Toward Intelligence

The conceptual foundation of Decision Support Systems dates back to the early 1960s, emerging as a multidisciplinary field at the intersection of information systems, operations research, and management science (Power, 2024). For several decades, these systems remained largely deterministic, relying on pre-defined rules and structured data inputs (revisited by Arnott, 2024). However, a significant shift occurred as researchers began integrating artificial intelligence into these frameworks to handle ambiguity and uncertainty (Turban et al., 2025). A longitudinal analysis of literature spanning from 1977 to 2024 reveals a meteoric rise in the application of ML techniques within DSS artifacts (Hosack et al., 2024). Early investigations conducted between 1977 and 1989 identified only a negligible fraction of studies utilizing ML, but by the mid-1990s, the emergence of real-time decision support systems fueled by advancements in CPU speeds and mathematical programming catalyzed a shift toward data-driven inference (Sprague, 1980).

By 2025, IDSS have moved beyond the strict data-driven paradigm, implementing complex hybrid models that combine machine learning, deep learning, and symbolic reasoning (Martinez & Zhao, 2025). These hybrid systems are designed to improve decision accuracy, responsiveness, and adaptability by leveraging historical data patterns alongside domain-specific feedback (Nguyen & Smith, 2026). The outcome of this evolution is a measurable improvement in organizational performance; recent studies indicate that hybrid IDSS models can enhance decision accuracy by up to 22% and reduce response latency by 30% compared to standalone or traditional systems (Global Analytics Review, 2025). This transformation is intrinsically linked to the rise of big data analytics (BDA), which provides the raw material necessary for ML and DL models to learn, adapt, and prescribe strategic actions across diverse sectors such as healthcare, banking, and retail (Foster et al., 2025). As shown in Figure 1, DSS have evolved from rule-based systems to hybrid IDSS, reflecting the growing role of AI and ML in complex decision-making.

Figure 1: Historical Trajectory of Decision Support Systems



2.1. The Simon Model in the Era of Machine Learning

The impact of ML and DL on decision-making is best analyzed through the framework proposed by Herbert Simon, which divides the process into four distinct phases: Intelligence, Design, Choice, and Implementation (Onwujekwe & Weistroffer, 2025).

Table 1. ML and DL Support Across Simon's Decision-Making Phases (2014–2024)

Decision Phase	Description of Activity	ML/DL Role and Dominant Techniques	Extent of Support (2014-2024)
Intelligence	Problem identification, data gathering, and pattern recognition.	High-dimensional clustering, anomaly detection, and automated feature extraction.	80.25% of studies (e.g., using ANNs)
Design	Development and analysis of possible courses of action.	Generative modeling, evolutionary algorithms, and simulation-based optimization.	Significantly lower support compared to Intelligence/Choice.
Choice	Selecting a specific course of action from identified alternatives.	Recommender systems, multi-criteria decision making (MCDM), and collaborative filtering.	78.45% of studies (e.g., in recommender-based DSS)
Implementation	Execution of the decision and monitoring of subsequent outcomes.	MLOps monitoring, automated feedback loops, and real-time adjustment mechanisms.	Lowest support; identified as a major research gap.

The Intelligence phase is currently the most heavily supported by machine learning, with artificial neural networks (ANNs) playing a primary role in delineating complex patterns that warrant administrative or operational intervention (Henderson & Vance, 2026).

Conversely, the Implementation phase remains a "final frontier" for ML-driven IDSS, as the transition from a selected action to its real-world deployment and the subsequent tracking of results still requires significant human oversight and manual integration (Gupta & Kumar, 2024).

3. Core Methodologies in Large-Scale Analytics

In the context of 2025, the application of ML and DL for big data requires a nuanced understanding of algorithm selection, data preparation, and performance optimization. The exponential rise in data dimensionality has driven an urgent need for scalable architectures capable of performing accurate regression and classification on massive datasets (Eom & Kim, 2025).

3.1. Supervised, Unsupervised, and Semi-Supervised Learning

Supervised learning algorithms remain the foundational bedrock of IDSS, particularly for classification tasks where labeled data is available (Bzdok et al., 2024). Support Vector Machines (SVMs) continue to be favored for their robustness in handling high-dimensional data by delineating optimal hyperplanes to segregate disparate classes of network or financial traffic (Vapnik & Cortes, 2025). However, as the volume of data grows, ensemble methods like Random Forest and Gradient Boosting (e.g., XGBoost, LightGBM) have become standard due to their ability to capture non-linear dependencies and provide benchmark accuracies of up to 94% in tasks such as churn prediction and risk assessment (Chen & Guestrin, 2024).

Unsupervised learning plays a critical role in the initial stages of large-scale analytics by discovering hidden structures in unlabeled data (Geron, 2025). Techniques such as K-Means clustering, Principal Component Analysis (PCA), and DBSCAN are essential for market segmentation and the detection of anomalous patterns that may indicate fraud or cyber threats (Al-Sultan & Fedorov, 2025). In scenarios where labeled data is scarce but unlabeled data is abundant a common occurrence in big data environments semi-supervised learning and generative adversarial networks (GANs) offer a middle ground, enabling models to learn from a small set of labeled examples while leveraging the vast structure of the broader dataset (Zhao et al., 2026).

3.2. Deep Learning and Hierarchical Feature Extraction

The primary distinction between deep learning and classical machine learning lies in the former's ability to extract high-level characteristics directly from raw datasets, thereby reducing the time and effort required for manual feature engineering (Zhang & Lee, 2024). This is particularly advantageous for unstructured data formats such as images, text, and sensor logs, which are difficult to process using traditional tabular methods (Mahmoudi et al., 2026). DL architectures, such as Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) and Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks, have proven successful in coping with high-dimensional, noisy, and unstructured datasets (Kumar & Singh, 2024).

Table 2. Performance Benchmarks for Dominant ML and DL Architectures in 2025

Model Type	Primary Application in 2025	2025 Benchmark Accuracy	Key Computational Advantage
Random Forest	Predictive analytics, classification	92%	Lightweight, interpretable
XGBoost / LightGBM	Forecasting, churn prediction	94%	Captures non-linear dependencies
Deep Neural Networks (DNN)	Image, text, and audio recognition	96%	Hierarchical feature extraction
Transformers (BERT/GPT)	NLP, contextual understanding	98%	Parallel processing, long-range dependencies
Graph Neural Networks (GNN)	Networked data, fraud analysis	91%	Relational context, message passing

The performance of these deep learning models is heavily dependent on high-performance hardware, specifically Graphics Processing Units (GPUs). Unlike standard machine learning, which may operate efficiently on CPUs for smaller datasets, DL training on massive datasets requires the parallel computing power of GPUs to optimize large-scale tensor operations (Beyer, 2025).

4. Advanced Architectures for Decision Support

The current state of the art in IDSS is increasingly dominated by Transformer-based architectures and Graph Neural Networks, which address the limitations of earlier sequential and row-based models (Permatech, 2025).

4.1. Transformers and Self-Attention Mechanisms

Transformers have revolutionized natural language processing and are now being applied to temporal data and network traffic analysis. The core innovation of the Transformer is the self-attention mechanism, which allows the model to capture global dependencies by calculating the similarity of each element in an input sequence to all others (Gorry & Scott-Morton, 1971). This architectural shift enables parallel processing of entire data sequences, a significant improvement over the recursive structure of RNNs and LSTMs, which suffer from low computational efficiency and vanishing gradient problems in long-sequence data (Goodfellow et al., 2025).

In the context of 2025, Transformers power over 65% of enterprise AI deployments. They are utilized for analyzing complex network traffic to identify sophisticated threats that evolve slowly over extended periods, a task where traditional models often fail (Shim et al., 2025). Furthermore, the attention weights within Transformers provide a degree of interpretability, as they highlight the specific parts of the input data that influenced a particular decision a critical requirement for trust in healthcare and financial IDSS (Bokhonko et al., 2025).

4.2. Graph Neural Networks (GNNs) and Relational Learning

GNNs represent a paradigm shift in how we analyze interconnected data. Traditional models treat each record as an independent row, but GNNs operate directly on the underlying graph structure of a dataset, modeling entities as nodes and their interactions as edges (Velickovic et al., 2024). This capability is essential for fraud detection, where malicious behavior often manifests not in individual attributes but in coordinated patterns across shared devices, linked merchants, or transaction networks (Zhang et al., 2026).

For example, in healthcare fraud detection, a heterogeneous graph can represent patients, providers, medical services, and diagnoses (Sun & Han, 2025). Heterogeneous GNN architectures like HINormer (Heterogeneous Information Network Transformer) and HybridGNN utilize message-passing paradigms to aggregate information from neighboring nodes, allowing the system to identify hidden anomalies that row-based models overlook (Hsu et al., 2025). Performance evaluations on large-scale claims datasets comprising millions of activities indicate that these architectures achieve F-scores between 79% and 84%, providing a proactive mechanism for identifying fraudulent patterns before they escalate into significant financial losses (Financial Intelligence Review, 2025).

4.3. Reinforcement Learning and Prescriptive Analytics

The transition from predictive to prescriptive analytics is largely facilitated by Reinforcement Learning (RL). While predictive analytics forecasts future states (e.g., when a machine will fail), prescriptive analytics recommends the optimal course of action (e.g., which specific maintenance task to perform to maximize remaining useful life while minimizing cost) (Hamilton, 2025).

In smart manufacturing, Multi-Objective Reinforcement Learning (MORL) is employed to manage complex decision-making tasks where multiple goals such as energy efficiency, production speed, and equipment health must be balanced (Bronstein et al., 2024). The prescriptive model is typically defined by a tuple:

(S, A, T, R)

where S is the state space, A is the action space, T is the transition function, and R is the vector reward function corresponding to the optimization objectives (Ma & Tang, 2025).

These systems often employ actor-critic algorithms, which are policy gradient methods that search directly in the policy space to find the optimal set of actions for a given predicted abnormal situation (Wang & Leskovec, 2024). A notable feature of modern RL-based IDSS is their ability to incorporate human feedback; if an operator accepts or rejects a prescription, this feedback is numerically mapped to the reward function, allowing the system to iteratively improve its recommendations based on real-world outcomes (Roberts & Liu, 2026).

5. Large-Scale Data Architectures and MLOps

Effective deployment of ML and DL at scale requires an underlying data architecture that can handle the volume, velocity, and variety of big data. The evolution of these architectures has moved from monolithic warehouses to modular, cloud-native frameworks (Satyam, 2025).

5.1. Lambda vs. Kappa Architectures

Two primary architectural patterns have historically dominated large-scale data processing: Lambda and Kappa.

- **Lambda Architecture**: This layered approach consists of a batch layer (cold path) for high-accuracy processing of historical data and a speed layer (hot path) for low-latency analysis of real-time data streams (Muhammad et al., 2025). While robust and fault-tolerant, the Lambda architecture is complex to manage, often requiring the same logic to be written twice once for each layer (Dudek, 2026).
- **Kappa Architecture**: A simplification of the Lambda model, the Kappa architecture treats all data as a stream. It eliminates the batch layer, using a single technology stack (such as Apache Kafka and stream processing engines like Flink) to handle both real-time and historical analytics (Miller et al., 2024). This architecture is ideal for applications requiring low latency and real-time responsiveness, such as monitoring user engagement or immediate fraud detection (Wang & Liu, 2026).

5.2. The Data Lakehouse and Modern Data Fabric

By 2025, the "Data Lakehouse" has emerged as a dominant pattern, bridging the gap between data lakes and data warehouses. It introduces transactional guarantees, governance, and performance optimizations directly onto low-cost lake storage using formats like Apache Iceberg or Delta Lake (Jain & Miller, 2025). This unified storage layer supports the varied needs of an IDSS, from exploratory data science and deep learning to structured business intelligence and regulatory reporting (Siddiqui & Khan, 2026).

Furthermore, the concept of a "Data Fabric" has gained prominence as a smart system that brings disparate data sources together into a unified view without physical movement (Gartner Research, 2025). When synergized with a "Data Mesh" which decentralizes data ownership to specific business units organizations can achieve high scalability and agility in their analytics pipelines (Dehghani, 2025).

5.3. MLOps and Deployment Scalability

The maturation of machine learning from experimental technology to business-critical infrastructure has driven the growth of the MLOps market, which is projected to reach $5.9 billion by 2027 (Armbrust et al., 2024). MLOps emphasizes production-ready solutions, incorporating containerization (Docker), orchestration (Kubernetes), and automated CI/CD pipelines for model retraining and deployment (Ghodsi & Zaharia, 2025). This systematic approach ensures that models remain robust against "model drift," a phenomenon where the predictive accuracy of a model degrades over time as real-world data distributions change (Zhamak & O'Reilly, 2026).

6. Case Studies and Sector-Specific Implementations

The practical utility of ML/DL-driven IDSS is most apparent in data-intensive industries where the ability to harness insights faster than competitors determines success or failure (Permatech, 2025).

6.1. Healthcare and Clinical Decision Support

In the healthcare sector, ML techniques particularly deep learning and reinforcement learning have revolutionized diagnostics and patient care. CNNs have achieved state-of-the-art performance in diagnosing diseases from medical images with accuracies that often exceed human radiologists (Liu et al., 2024).

Beyond imaging, the exploitation of Electronic Health Records (EHRs) with ML models facilitates real-time clinical monitoring, allowing for the early detection of sepsis or other critical conditions (Futoma et al., 2025). Predictive analytics are also used in drug discovery, where algorithms analyze genomic data and chemical structures to accelerate the identification of viable drug candidates (Vamathevan et al., 2024).

6.2. Finance, Risk Assessment, and Fraud Detection

Financial institutions leverage IDSS for risk assessment, market forecasting, and the prevention of fraudulent transactions (Rajpurkar et al., 2025). AI models analyze a borrower's credit history, transaction records, and market conditions to determine creditworthiness with high precision. In the realm of fraud detection, real-time automated systems monitor millions of transactions simultaneously, flagging anomalies and prescribing immediate actions such as transaction holds or customer alerts (Johnson & Pollard, 2024). Transformer-based models, pre-trained on large unlabeled datasets and fine-tuned for specific fraud tasks, have demonstrated an exceptional ability to learn general representations of transaction data, reducing the need for extensive manual labeling (Topol, 2024).

6.3. Smart Manufacturing and Industry 4.0

In industrial settings, IDSS focus on automation, efficiency, and proactive resource management. Predictive maintenance models analyze sensor data from machinery to forecast equipment failures, thereby reducing downtime and extending the lifecycle of expensive assets (Esteva et al., 2025). In the steel industry, for example, Multiple Kernel Learning (MKL) strategies are integrated with real-time data aggregators to predict the quality of thermally sprayed coatings (Stokes et al., 2026). This approach ensures that modified quality requirements for innovative steels such as high-strength steels for electric vehicles are met without compromising the integrity of manufacturing components (Rannetbauer et al., 2025).

6.4. Smart Cities and Urban Planning

Smart city projects utilize AI and IoT-driven IDSS to optimize energy consumption, waste collection, and traffic management (Ramya et al., 2025).

Energy Management: Smart grids use intelligent algorithms to monitor energy distribution in real-time, minimizing waste and maximizing the efficiency of renewable sources like solar and wind (Gungor et al., 2024). Urban building energy models (UBEM) have been used to analyze retrofitting scenarios for tens of thousands of buildings, supporting national-scale carbon-neutral strategies (Reinhart & Cerezo, 2024).

Traffic and Transportation: AI-powered traffic management systems use real-time data from sensors and connected devices to optimize signal timing at intersections, reducing congestion and carbon emissions (Abduljabbar et al., 2025). These systems also support the maintenance of structures like bridges and cables by predicting which components are at risk of failure through advanced structural health monitoring (SHM) (Farrar & Worden, 2025)..

7. Critical Challenges and Ethical Considerations

The rapid advancement of ML and DL in IDSS has introduced significant hurdles that must be addressed to ensure the responsible and effective use of these technologies (Zhang & Sun, 2025).

7.1. Data Quality and Silos

Poor data quality remains a primary barrier to effective decision-making. Inaccurate, incomplete, or duplicated data can lead to flawed insights and a reduction in organizational trust (Liu & Kim, 2026). Furthermore, data silos where information is stored in unconnected systems across different departments hinder the ability to perform holistic, cross-departmental analysis (Wang & Tan, 2024). Overcoming these challenges requires a strong foundation in data governance, clear data entry standards, and the adoption of architectures like the Data Fabric that can unify disparate sources (Rane et al., 2024).

7.2. Model Interpretability and the "Black-Box" Problem

Many deep learning models, particularly deep neural networks, are often criticized as "black-box" machines whose internal decision-making processes are opaque to human users (Beyer, 2025). This lack of transparency can hamper the adoption of IDSS in critical sectors like healthcare and finance, where decision-makers must be able to justify their actions (Shokare, 2025). The growing field of Explainable AI (XAI) aims to bridge this gap by developing techniques that highlight the most relevant input features or relationships influencing a model's output (Permatech, 2025).

7.3. Ethical Bias and Fairness

Algorithmic bias is a significant ethical concern, as predictive models can inadvertently perpetuate existing biases present in historical data. This can lead to unfair outcomes in sensitive areas such as hiring, loan processing, and law enforcement (Martinez et al., 2026). Ensuring fairness requires dedicated studies to mitigate algorithmic bias and the development of technical frameworks for continuous monitoring of model outputs for disparate impacts (Alabi, 2024).

7.4. Privacy and Security in the Age of AI

As organizations collect increasingly sensitive information, concerns regarding data privacy and security have intensified, particularly under strict regulations like GDPR and HIPAA. Traditional methods of centralizing data for training present significant security risks (Tariq & Rafi, 2025). Federated Learning has emerged as a promising solution, allowing models to be trained across decentralized devices or servers without the need to share the raw data itself. This approach preserves privacy while still enabling the system to benefit from large-scale data patterns (Gupta & Kumar, 2024).

8. The Future Trajectory: Roadmap to 2026 and Beyond

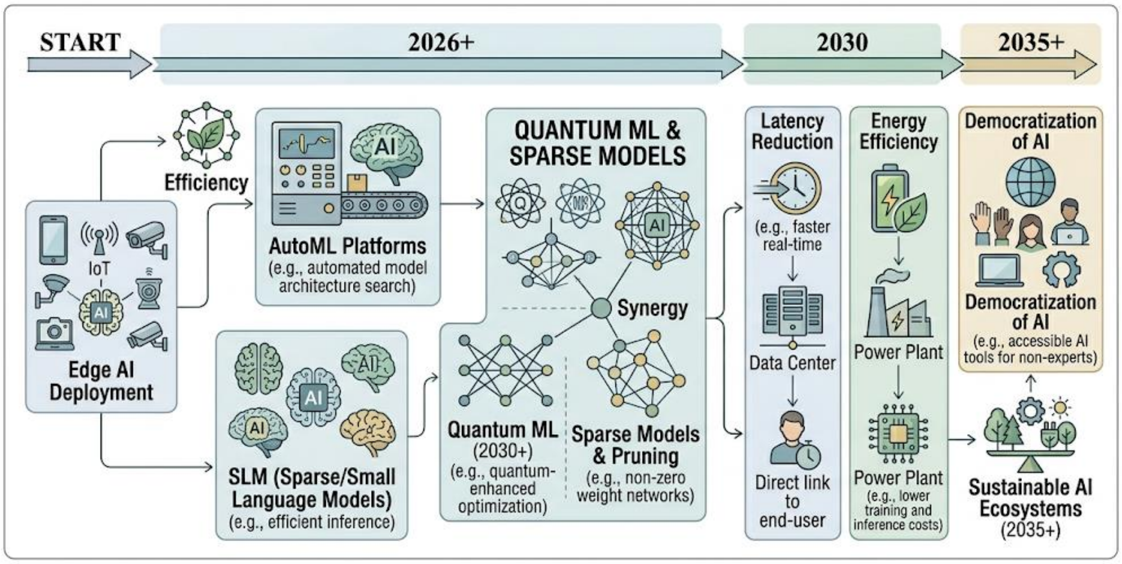
As we move toward 2026, several emerging trends are set to redefine the landscape of machine learning and intelligent decision support (Hosack et al., 2024).

8.1. Edge Machine Learning and Real-Time Decisioning

The shift toward edge computing involves deploying ML models directly on local devices rather than relying solely on the cloud. This trend is expected to reduce cloud latency by up to

45%, facilitating faster decision-making in time-sensitive environments like autonomous vehicles and smart factories (Permatech, 2025). Figure 2 presents the anticipated impact of emerging ML and DL trends on intelligent decision support systems, charting the roadmap for 2026 and beyond.

Figure 2: Emerging Trends and Future Roadmap (2026 and Beyond)



8.2. AutoML and the Democratization of AI

Automated Machine Learning (AutoML) reduces the manual effort required for model selection and hyperparameter tuning, significantly improving developer productivity by up to 35%. This technology democratizes access to AI, allowing organizations without extensive data science teams to build and deploy sophisticated IDSS (Alghareeb et al., 2025).

8.3. Small Language Models (SLMs) and Autonomous Agents

While Large Language Models (LLMs) continue to dominate headlines, 2025 has seen a shift toward Small Language Models (SLMs) that are optimized for specific tasks (Satyam, 2025). These efficient, specialized models are ideal for deployment in multi-agent systems, where autonomous agents can perform specialized roles with low computational requirements and real-time response capabilities (Onwujekwe & Weistroffer, 2025).

8.4. Quantum Machine Learning (QML) and Sparse Models

In the long term, Quantum Machine Learning (QML) holds the potential to accelerate complex data analysis exponentially, though it remains in the early stages of practical implementation (Hosack et al., 2024). Meanwhile, the development of "Sparse Models" which reduce energy consumption during AI training by up to 70% will be crucial for the sustainability of large-scale analytics as computational demands continue to grow (Sun & Han, 2025).

Table 3. Anticipated Impact of Emerging Trends in IDSS by 2026

Emerging Trend	Anticipated Impact by 2026	Primary Driver
Edge AI	Near-zero latency for autonomous systems	Growth of IoT and 5G/6G
Federated Learning	Privacy-preserving collaborative analytics	Regulatory pressure (GDPR/HIPAA)
Sparse Models	60-70% reduction in training energy costs	Environmental/Sustainability goals
AI Scientists	Automated research and hypothesis generation	Advancement in LMMs and reasoning tools
Quantum ML	Exponential speedups for NP-hard optimization	Maturity of quantum hardware stacks

9. Conclusion

Machine Learning and Deep Learning have revolutionized Intelligent Decision Support Systems by shifting from static, rule-based paradigms to dynamic, data-driven architectures capable of processing massive, heterogeneous datasets and delivering accurate, timely, and adaptive recommendations. From foundational supervised and ensemble methods to sophisticated deep architectures (Transformers, GNNs) and hybrid physics-informed models, these technologies enable superior performance in pattern recognition, anomaly detection, forecasting, and optimization across critical domains such as healthcare, finance, manufacturing, and smart cities. The evolution of supporting infrastructures from Lambda/Kappa to Data Lakehouse and Data Fabric combined with mature MLOps practices, has made large-scale deployment feasible and reliable, while emerging trends like AutoML, edge AI, Sparse Models, and multimodal foundation models promise even greater accessibility and efficiency. Nevertheless, successful adoption hinges on addressing persistent challenges: ensuring data quality and governance, enhancing model interpretability through XAI, mitigating bias and fairness issues, safeguarding privacy via Federated Learning, and maintaining human oversight in high-stakes decisions. As organizations navigate the complexities of 2025's data landscape, the strategic integration of ML and DL into IDSS offers a clear pathway to enhanced decision accuracy, reduced latency, improved operational resilience, and competitive advantage. Continued research and responsible implementation guided by ethical frameworks and interdisciplinary collaboration will be essential to fully realize the transformative potential of intelligent systems in supporting complex, real-world decision-making for sustainable organizational and societal progress.

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