**Overview of Bayesian Network**

Loc Nguyen

International Engineering and Technology Institute (IETI), Hong Kong

Anum Shafiq

Preston University, Islamabad, Pakistan

# Abstract

Bayesian network is applied widely in machine learning, data mining, diagnosis, etc. It has a solid evidence-based inference which is familiar to human intuition. However, Bayesian network causes a little confusion because there are many complicated concepts, formulas and diagrams relating to it. Such concepts should be organized and presented in clear manner so as to be easy to understand it. This is the goal of this report. The report includes 5 main sections that cover principles of Bayesian network. The section 1 is an introduction to Bayesian network giving some basic concepts. Advanced concepts are mentioned in section 2. Inference mechanism of Bayesian network is described in section 3. Parameter learning which tells us how to update parameters of Bayesian network is described in section 4. Section 5 focuses on structure learning which mentions approaches to build up Bayesian network. In general, three main subjects of BN are inference, parameter learning, and structure learning which are mentioned in successive sections 3, 4, and 5. Section 6 is the optional one mentioning applications of Bayesian network. Section 7 is the conclusions. Main contents of this reported are extracted from the book “Learning Bayesian Networks” by Richard E. Neapolitan (2003) and the PhD dissertation “A User Modeling for Adaptive Learning” by Loc Nguyen (2014).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (9.99) |

# 1. Introduction

This introduction section starts with a little bit discussion of Bayesian inference which is the base of both Bayesian network and inference in Bayesian network described later. Note, main content of this reported are extracted from the book “Learning Bayesian Networks” by Richard E. Neapolitan (Neapolitan, 2003) and the PhD dissertation “A User Modeling for Adaptive Learning” by Loc Nguyen (Nguyen, 2014).

**Bayesian inference** (Wikipedia, Bayesian inference, 2006), a form of statistical method, is responsible for collecting evidences to change the current belief in given hypothesis. The more evidences are observed, the higher degree of belief in hypothesis is. First, this belief was assigned by an initial probability or prior probability. Note, in classical statistical theory, the random variable’s probability is objective (physical) through trials. But, in Bayesian method, the probability of hypothesis is “personal” because its initial value is set subjectively by expert. When evidences were gathered enough, the hypothesis is considered trustworthy.

Bayesian inference is based on so-called Bayes’ rule or Bayes’ theorem (Wikipedia, Bayesian inference, 2006) specified in equation 1.1 as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (1.1) |

Where,

* *H* is probability variable denoting a hypothesis existing before evidence.
* *D* is also probabilistic variable denoting an observed evidence. It is conventional that notations *d*, *D* and are used to denote evidence, evidences, evidence sample, data sample, sample, training data and corpus (another term for data sample). Data sample or evidence sample is defined as a set of data or a set of observations which is collected by an individual, a group of person, a computer software or a business process, which focuses on a particular analysis purpose (Wikipedia, Sample (statistics), 2014). The term “data sample” is derived from statistics; please read the book “Applied Statistics and Probability for Engineers” by Montgomery and Runger (Montgomery & Runger, 2003, p. 4) for more details about sample and statistics.
* *P*(*H*) is *prior probability* of hypothesis *H*. It reflects the degree of subjective belief in hypothesis *H*.
* *P*(*H|D*), conditional probability of *H* with given *D*, is called *posterior probability*. It tells us the changed belief in hypothesis when occurring evidence. Whether or not the hypothesis in Bayesian inference is considered trustworthy is determined based on the posterior probability. In general, posterior probability is cornerstone of Bayesian inference.
* *P*(*D|H*) is conditional probability of occurring evidence *D* when hypothesis *H* was given. In fact, likelihood ratio is *P*(*D|H*)/ *P*(*D*) but *P*(*D*) is constant value. So we can consider *P*(*D*|*H*) as *likelihood function* of *H* with fixed *D*. Please pay attention to the conditional probability because it is mentioned over the whole research.
* *P*(*D*) is probability of occurring evidence *D* together all mutually exclusive cases of hypothesis. If *H* and *D* are discrete, then , otherwise with *H* and *D* being continuous, *f* denoting probability density function (Montgomery & Runger, 2003, p. 99). Because of being sum of products of prior probability and likelihood function, *P*(*D*) is called *marginal probability*.

Note: *H*, *D* must be random variables (Montgomery & Runger, 2003, p. 53) according to theory of probability and statistics and *P*(.) denotes *random probability*.

Beside Bayes’ rule, there are three other rules such as additional rule, multiplication rule and total probability rule which are relevant to conditional probability. Given two random events (or random variables) *X* and *Y*, the additional rule (Montgomery & Runger, 2003, p. 33) and multiplication rule (Montgomery & Runger, 2003, p. 44) are expressed in equations 1.2 and 1.3, respectively as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (1.2) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (1.3) |

Where notations and denote union operator and intersection operator in set theory (Wikipedia, Set (mathematics), 2014). Your attention please, when *X* and *Y* are numerical variables, notations and also denote operators “or” and “and” in theory logic (Rosen, 2012, pp. 1-12). If *X* and *Y* are mutually independent (mutually exclusive) then, and are often denoted as *X*+*Y* and *XY*, respectively and so, we have:

The probability *P*(*XY*)=*P*(*X*,*Y*) is often known as joint probability.

Given a complete set of mutually exclusive events *X*1, *X*2,…, *Xn* such that

The total probability rule (Montgomery & Runger, 2003, p. 44) is specified in equation 1.4 as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (1.4) |

If *X* and *Y* are continuous variables, the total probability rule is re-written in integral form as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (1.5) |

Note, *P*(*Y|X*) and *P*(*X*) are continuous functions known as probability density functions mentioned right after.

Please pay attention to Bayes’ rule (equation 1.1) and total probability rule (equations 1.4 and 1.5) because they are used frequently over the whole research.

**Bayesian network (BN)** (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 40) is combination of graph theory and Bayesian inference. It is a directed acyclic graph (DAG) which has a set of nodes and a set of directed arcs; please pay attention to the terms “DAG” and “BN” because they are used over the whole research. Each node represents a random variable which can be an evidence or hypothesis in Bayesian inference. Each arc reveals the relationship among two nodes. If there is the arc from node *A* to *B*, we call “*A* causes *B*” or “*A* is parent of *B*”, in other words, *A* depends conditionally on *B*. Otherwise there is no arc between *A* and *B*, it asserts the conditional independence. Note, in BN context, terms: *node and variable are the same*.

A node has a local Conditional Probability Distribution (CPD) with attention that conditional probability distribution is often called shortly *probability distribution* or *distribution*. If variables are discrete, CPD is simplified as Conditional Probability Table (CPT). If variables are continuous, CPD is often called conditional Probability Density Function (PDF) which will be mentioned in section 4 – how to learn CPT from beta density function. PDF can be called *density function*, in brief. CPD is the general term for both CPT and PDF; there is convention that CPD, CPT and PDF indicate both probability and conditional probability. In general, each CPD, CPT or PDF specifies a random variable and is known as the *probability distribution* or *distribution* of such random variable.

Another representation of CPD is cumulative distribution function (CDF) (Montgomery & Runger, 2003, p. 64) (Montgomery & Runger, 2003, p. 102) but CDF and PDF have the same meaning and they share interchangeable property when PDF is derivative of CDF; in other words, CDF is integral of PDF. In practical statistics, PDF is used more commonly than CDF is used and so, PDF is mentioned over the whole research. Note, notation *P*(.) often denotes probability and it can be used to denote PDF but we prefer to use lower case letters such as *f* and *g* to denote PDF. Given a variable having PDF *f*, we often state that “such variable has distribution *f* or such variable has density function *f*”. Let *F*(*X*) and *f*(*X*) be CDF and PDF, respectively, equation 1.6 is the definition of CDF and PDF.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (1.6) |

Because this introduction section focuses on BN, please read (Montgomery & Runger, 2003, pp. 98-103) for more details about CDF and PDF.

Now please pay attention to the concept CPT because it occurs very frequently in the research; you can understand simply that CPT is essentially collection of discrete conditional probabilities of each node (variable). It is easy to infer that CPT is discrete form of PDF. When one node is conditionally dependent on another, there is a corresponding probability (in CPT or CPD) measuring the influence of causal node on this node. In case that node has no parent, its CPT *degenerates into prior probabilities*. This is the reason CPT is often identified with probabilities and conditional probabilities. This report focuses on discrete BN and so CPT is an important concept.

E.g., in figure 1.1, event “cloudy” is cause of event “rain” which in turn is cause of “grass is wet” (Murphy, 1998). So we have three causal relationships of: 1-cloudy to rain, 2- rain to wet grass, 3- sprinkler to wet grass. This model is expressed below by BN with four nodes and three arcs corresponding to four events and three relationships. Every node has two possible values True (1) and False (0) together its CPT.



**Figure 1.1.** Bayesian network (a classic example about wet grass)

Note that random variables *C*, *S*, *R*, and *W* denote phenomena or events such as cloudy, sprinkler, rain, and wet grass, respectively and the table next to each node expresses the CPT of such node. For instance, focusing on the CPT attached to node “Wet grass”, if it is rainy (*R*=1) and garden is sprinkled (*S*=1), it is almost certain that grass is wet (*W*=1). Such assertion can be represented mathematically by the condition probability of event “grass is wet” (*W*=1) given evident events “rain” (*R*=1) and “sprinkler” (*S*=1) is 0.99 as in the attached table, *P*(*W*=1|*R*=1, *S*=1) = 0.99. As seen, the conditional probability *P*(*W*=1|*R*=1,*S*=1) is an entry of the CPT attached to node “Wet grass”. In general, BN consists of two models such as qualitative model and quantitative model. Qualitative model is the structure as the graph shown in figure 1.1. Quantitative model includes parameters which are CPT (s) attached nodes in BN. Thus, CPT (s) as well as conditional probabilities are known as parameters of BN. Parameter learning and structure learning will be mentioned in sections 4 and 5.

Beside important subjects of BN such as parameter learning and structure learning, there is a more essential subject which is inference mechanism inside BN when the inference mechanism is a very powerful mathematical tool that BN provides us. Before studying inference mechanism in this wet grass example, we should know some advanced concepts of Bayesian network.

Suppose we use two notations *Xi* and Ω*i* to indicate a node and a set of all its ascendant nodes. Let *X* = {*X*1, *X*2,…, *Xn*} be the set of nodes in BN, the **G**lobal **J**oint **P**robability **D**istribution (GJPD) being product of all local CPD (s) or CPT (s) is specified as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (1.7) |

Suppose *PAi* is the subset of parent nodes such that *Xi* must depend conditionally and directly on every variable in *PAi.* In other words, there is always an arc from each variable in to *Xi* and no intermediate node between them. Thus, equation 1.7 becomes:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (1.8) |

Note that *P*(*Xi*|*PAi*) in equation 1.8 is the CPT of *Xi*. According to Bayesian rule, given evidence (random variables) , the posterior probability *P*(*Xi*|) of variable *Xi* is computed in equation 1.9 as below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (1.9) |

Where *P*(*Xi*) is prior probability of random variable *Xi* and *P*(|*Xi*) is conditional probability of occurring given *Xi* and *P*() is probability of occurring together all mutually exclusive cases of *X*. From equations 1.8 and 1.9, we gain equation 1.10 as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (1.10) |

Where and are all possible values *X* = (*X*1, *X*2,…, *Xn*) with fixing (excluding) and fixing (excluding) , respectively. Note that evidence including at least one random variable *Xi* is a subset of *X* and the sign “\” denotes the subtraction (excluding) in set theory (Wikipedia, Set (mathematics), 2014). Please pay attention that the equation 1.10 is the base for inference inside Bayesian network, which is used over the whole research. Equations 1.9 and 1.10 are extensions of Bayes’ rule specified by equation 1.1. It is not easy to understand equation 1.10 and so, please see equations 1.12 and 1.13 which are advanced posterior probabilities applied into wet grass example in order to comprehend equation 1.10.

From figure 1.1 of wet grass example and according to equation 1.7, we have:

Applying equation 1.8, *P*(*S*|*C*)=*P*(*S*) due to no conditional independence assertion about variables *S* and *C*. Furthermore, because *S* is intermediate node between *C* and *W*, we should remove *C* from *P*(*W | C*, *R*, *S*), hence *P*(*W* | *C*, *R*, *S*)= *P*(*W* | *R*, *S*). In short, applying equation 1.8, we have equation 1.11 for determining global joint probability distribution of “wet grass” Bayesian network as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (1.11) |

Using **Bayesian inference**, we need to compute the posterior probability of each hypothesis node in network. In general, the computation based on Bayesian rule is known as the inference in BN.

Reviewing figure 1.1, suppose *W* becomes evidence variable which is observed as the fact that the grass is wet, so, *W* has value 1. There is request for answering the question: how to determine which cause (sprinkler or rain) is more possible for wet grass. Hence, we will calculate two posterior probabilities of *R* (=1) and *S* (=1) in condition *W* (=1). Such probabilities called *explanations* for *W* are simple forms of equation 1.10, expended by equations 1.12 and 1.13 as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (1.12) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (1.13) |

Note that the numerator in the right side of equation 1.12 is the sum of possible probabilities over possible values of *C* and *S*. Concretely, we have an interpretation for the numerator as follows:

Applying equation 1.11 for global joint probability distribution of “wet grass” Bayesian network, we have:

It is easy to infer that there is the same interpretation for numerators and denominators in right sides of equations 1.12 and 1.13 and the previous equation 1.10 is also understood simply by this way when {*C*, *S*} = {*C*, *R*, *S*, *W*}\{*R*, *W*} and fixing {*R*, *W*}. In similar, we have:

In fact, equations 1.12 and 1.13 are expansions of equation 1.10. As a result, we have:

Obviously, the posterior probability of event “sprinkler” (*S*=1) is larger than the posterior probability of event “rain” (*R*=1) given evidence “wet grass” (*W*=1), which leads to conclusion that sprinkler is the most likely cause of wet grass. Now a short description of Bayesian is introduced. Next section will concern advanced concepts of Bayesian network.

# 2. Advanced concepts

Recall that Bayesian network (BN) is the directed acyclic graph (DAG) (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 40) in which the nodes (vertices) are linked together by directed edges (arcs); each edge expresses the dependence relationships between nodes. If there is the edge from node *A* to *B*, we call “*A* causes *B*” or “*A* is parent of *B*”, in other words, *B* depends conditionally on *A*. So, the edge *A→B* denotes parent-child, prerequisite or cause-effect relationship. Otherwise there is no edge between *A* and *B*, it asserts the conditional independence. Let *V* = {*X*1, *X*2, *X*3,…, *Xn*} and *E* be a set of nodes and a set of edges, Let *G* = (*V*, *E*) denote a DAG where *V* is a set of nodes and *E* is a set of edges. Figure 2.1 is an example of DAG which is structure of BN.

**Figure 2.1.** An example of DAG

Note that node *Xi* is also random variable. In this report, uppercase letters, for example *X*, *Y*, *Z*, denote random variables or set of random variables whereas lowercase letters, for example *x*, *y*, *z*, denote their instantiations. We should glance over other popular concepts.

* If there is an edge between *X* and *Y* (*X*→*Y* or *X*←*Y*) then *X* and *Y* are called *adjacent* each other(or *incident* to the edge).
* Given *k* nodes {*X*1, *X*2, *X*3,…, *Xk*} in such a way that every pair of node (*Xi*, *Xi*+1) are incident to the edge *Xi→Xi*+1 where 1 *i  k*–1, all edges that connects such *k* nodes compose a *path* from *X*1 to *Xk* denoted as [*X*1, *X*2, *X*3,…, *Xk*] or *X*1*→X*2*→…→Xk*. The nodes *X*2, *X*3,…, *Xk*–1 are called *interior* nodes of the path. The *sub-path* *Xm→…Xn* is a path from *Xm* to *Xn*: *Xm→Xm*+1*→…→Xn* where 1 *≤ m < n ≤ k*. The *directed cycle* is a path from a node to itself. The *simple path* is a path that has no directed cycle. The DAG is the graph that has no directed cycle.
* If there is a path from *X* to *Y* then *X* is called *ancestor* of *Y* and *Y* is called *descendant* of *X*. If *Y* isn’t a descendant of *X*, *Y* is called *non-descendent* of *X*.
* If the direction isn’t considered then edge and path are called *link* and *chain*, respectively. Link is denoted *A – B*. Chain is denoted *A – B – C*, for example.
* Graph *G* is a tree if every node except root has only one parent. *G* is called single-connected if there is only one chain (if exists) between two nodes. Almost BN (s) surveyed here are single-connected DAG (s).

The strength of dependence between two nodes is quantified by conditional probability table (CPT) in discrete case. In continuous case, CPT becomes conditional probability density function (CPD). So, each node has its own local CPT. In case that a node has no parent, its CPT degenerates into prior probabilities. For example, suppose *Xk* is binary node and it has two parents *Xi* and *Xj*, the CPT (or CPD) of *Xk* which is the conditional probability *P*(*Xk | Xi, Xj*) has eight entries:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *P*(*Xk*=1*|Xi*=1, *Xj*=1) | *P*(*Xk*=0*|Xi*=1, *Xj*=1) |
| *P*(*Xk*=1*|Xi*=1, *Xj*=0) | *P*(*Xk*=0*|Xi*=1, *Xj*=0) |
| *P*(*Xk*=1|*Xi*=0, *Xj*=1) | *P*(*Xk*=0*|Xi*=0, *Xj*=1) |
| *P*(*Xk*=1|*Xi*=0, *Xj*=0) | *P*(*Xk*=0*|Xi*=0, *Xj*=0) |

It is asserted that if *Xi* is binary node and has *n* parents then its CPT has *2n*+1 entries. However only *2n* entries are specified in practice due to *P*(*Xi=*0 | …) = 1–*P*(*Xi*=1|…) when *Xi* is binary. In case that *Xi* has *k* possible values, each CPT has *kn* entries. Figure 1.1 is an example of BN. Let *PAi* be the set of direct parents of node *Xi*, the (global) *joint probability distribution* of whole BN is defined as product of CPT(s) or CPD(s) in continuous case of all nodes, according to equation 1.8.

So BN is represented by its joint probability distribution *P* and its DAG. Let (*G*, *P*) denote a BN where *G* = (*V, E*) is the DAG and *P* is the joint probability distribution.

Suppose BN has *n* binary nodes. In the worst case, each node has *n*–1 parents, thus, the joint probability has *n\*2n* entries. There is a boom of CPT (s). There is a restrictive criterion called Markov condition that makes the relationships (also CPT) among nodes simpler. Given Bayesian network (G, P) and three sets of nodes: *A =* {*Xi*,…, *Xj*}, *B =* {*Xk*,…, *Xl*} and *C* = {*Xm*,…, *Xn*}:

* The denotation *IP*(*A*, *B*) or *IG*(*A*, *B*) indicates that *A* and *B* are independent.
* The denotation *IP*(*A*, *B | C* ) or *IG*(*A*, *B | C* ) indicates that *A* and *B* conditional independent given *C*.

Let (*G*, *P*) be a BN, *Markov condition* is stated that every node *X* is conditional independent from its non-descendants given its parent. In other word node *X* is only dependent on its previous nodes (directed parents). Equation 2.1 defines Markov condition.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (2.1) |

Where *E* is the set of edges in *G*, *NX* and *PAX* are set of non-descendants of *X* and parents of *X*, respectively. Figure 2.2 shows examples of Markov condition.

**Figure 2.2.** Examples about Markov condition

In figure 2.2, case (a) satisfies Markov condition where case (b) does not. Because inference and structure learning algorithms are based on Markov condition, please pay attention to it.

Suppose Bayesian (*G*, *P*) satisfies Markov condition, it is necessary to find out or check whether a node (or a set of nodes) *Z* that separates a node (or a set of nodes) *X* from another node (or a set of nodes) *Y*. It means that whether there is *IP*(*X*, *Y | Z*). In this case, *X* and *Y* are called *d-separated* by *Z*. There are some important concepts that constitute the d-separation concept:

* The chain *X→Z→Y* or *X←Z←Y* is called serial path.
* The chain *X→Z←Y* is called convergent.
* The chain *X←Z→Y* is called divergent.
* The chain *X–Z–Y* is called uncoupled chain if *X* and *Y* aren’t adjacent.

Of course, serial path, convergent path and divergent path are uncoupled chain.

**Figure 2.3.** Serial path (a), convergent path (b), divergent path (c), and uncoupled chain (d)

In figure 2.3, cases (a), (b), and (c) indicates serial path, convergent path, divergent path, and uncoupled chain, respectively.

Let *X*, *Y* and *Z* be sets of nodes such that they are subsets of V where *X*, *Y*, *Z V*. Given the chain *p* between *X* and *Y*, *p* is blocked by *Z* if and only if one of two conditions is satisfied:

* There is an intermediate node on *p* so that all edges on *p* incident to *M* are serial or divergent at *M*.
* There is an intermediate node *M* on *p* so that:
  + and all descendants of *M* also are not in *Z* ().
  + All edges op *p* incident to *M* are convergent*.*

Figure 2.4 shows blocked cases.

**Figure 2.4.** Blocked cases

In figure 2.4, the chain *X–Y–Z–W* in (a) is blocked by {*Y*, *Z*} because edges incident to *Y* are divergent at *Y*. The chain *X–Y–Z–W–T* in (b) is blocked by {*Z*, *W*} because there is such a node *Y* on chain that *Y* {*Z*, *W*}, its descendant *M* {*Z, W*}, and edges incident to *Y* are convergent at *Y*.

*X* and *Y* are d-separated by *Z* if all chains between *X* and *Y* are blocked by *Z*. *Z* is also called a *d*-separation of *G*. In figure 2.5, {*X*1, *X*2} is *d*-separated from {*X*5, *X*6} by {*X*3, *X*4}.

**Figure 2.5.** {*X*1, *X*2} is *d*-separated from {*X*5, *X*6} by {*X*3, *X*4}.

BN (s) which have the same set of nodes are *Markov equivalent* if and only if they have same *d*-separations. In other words, BN (s) that are Markov equivalent have the same independences. Equation 2.2 defines Markov equivalence given two BN (s) having two DAG (s) such as *G*1 = (*V*, *E*1) and *G*2 = (*V*, *E*2).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (2.2) |

Where *A*, *B*, and *C* are mutually disjoint sub-set of *V*. Note that *G*1 and *G*2 must be DAG and satisfy Markov condition.

The goal of giving “Markov equivalent” concept is to represent BN (s) that have the same structure and joint probability. So, the representation of such BN (s) is called *Markov equivalent class* which is also a Bayesian network. In conclusion, Markov equivalence divides all DAG (or BN) into disjoint Markov equivalent classes. In practice, Markov equivalent class is often find out or surveyed instead of considering many BN (s).

Now concepts relevant to BN were introduced in sections 1 and 2. Three main subjects of BN are inference, parameter learning, and structure learning which are mentioned in successive sections 3, 4, and 5. Recall that this report focuses on discrete BN. In other words, nodes are random discrete variables attached to CPT (s). Especially, random binary variables are preferred.

# 3. Inference

The essence of Bayesian reference is to compute the posterior probabilities of nodes given evidences. Equation 1.10 is the base of simple inference. Note that evidences or conditions are also nodes which are observed and have concrete values. Going back example “wet grass” in section 1, the posterior probability of *R* = 1 (rain) given *W* =1 (wet grass) is the ratio of the marginal probability of *R*, *W* over *C*, *S* to the marginal probability of *W* over *C*, *R*, *S*, according to equation 1.12 with note that equation 1.12 is an interpretation of equation 1.10.

Here we make clear equation 1.0 again. Let *V* = {*X*1, *X*2,…, *Xn*} be a whole set of nodes. Let *D =* {*Xm*+1, *Xm*+2,…, *Xm*+*u*} be a set of evidences, . Let *d =* {*xm*+1, *xm*+2,…, *xm*+*u*} be the instantiation of *D*. In general case, the marginal probability of *Xi* = *xi* is:

Where *P*(*X*1, *X*2,…, *Xn*) is the global joint probability. The marginal probability of *D* = *d* is:

The posterior probability of *Xi* = *xi* given *D = d* is:

The equation above is the basic idea of simple inference, which is the interpretation of equation 1.10. Note that it is also a variant of Bayesian rule (see equation 1.1). But the cost of computing it based on marginal probabilities is very high because there are a huge number of numeric operations such as additions and multiplications in computation expression. If the joint probability has many terms, brute force method for determining combinations of such operations is impossible. There are three main approaches that improve this computation:

* Taking advantages of Markov condition: Pearl’s message propagation (Pearl, 1986), (Neapolitan, 2003, pp. 126-156) is well-known algorithm.
* Taking advantages of the structure of DAG: Noisy OR-gate model (Neapolitan, 2003, pp. 156-160) and Junction Tree (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 161) are well-known algorithms.
* Reducing the amount of numeric operations computed in marginal probability: Symbolic probabilistic inference (SPI) algorithm (Neapolitan, 2003, pp. 162-170) is the well-known algorithm which finds optimal factoring for marginal probability computation.

# 4. Parameter learning

As a convention, uppercase letter such as *X*, *Y*, and *Z* denotes random variable whereas lowercase letters such as *x*, *y*, and *z* denote instances or values of random variables. According to Bayesian approach, parameters such as mean *μ* and variance *σ*2 of normal distribution and probability *p* of binominal distribution are random variables. These random variables are commonly denoted Θ, which are hypotheses according to equation 1.1. The prior distribution (prior probability) is denoted *P*(Θ | *ξ*) where *ξ* denotes background knowledge about Θ. Note that *ξ* is often parameter of the prior distribution and so it can be called hyper-parameter of prior distribution. For example, if Θ follows beta distribution, its prior distribution is:

Where *ξ* = (*a*, *b*) are two parameters of such prior (beta) distribution. Note that Γ(.) is gamma function:

For another example, if Θ is mean *μ* and it follows normal distribution, its prior distribution is:

Where *ξ* = (*μ*0, *σ*02) are mean and variance of such prior (normal) distribution. Given sample *D* = {*X*1, *X*2,…, *Xn*) consisting *n* observations (evidences) *Xi* with note that *n* can be 1. Equation 4.1 specifies posterior distribution (posterior probability) of Θ, according to Bayes’ rule (Heckerman, 1995, p. 6) (Wikipedia, Bayesian inference, 2006).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.1) |

Where *P*(*D* | Θ) is the likelihood function of Θ and *P*(*D*) is the marginal probability of sample. Note, the equation 4.1 is written fully as follows:

However *P*(*D* | Θ, *ξ*) = *P*(*D* | Θ) and *P*(*D* | *ξ*) = *P*(*D*) because *D* is only dependent on Θ. The marginal probability *P*(*D*) is expectation of the likelihood function *P*(*D* | Θ) given prior probability *P*(Θ | *ξ*).

Equation 4.1 which defines posterior probability of parameter Θ is used to assess hypothesis Θ after surveying sample *D*. This is a so-called *Bayesian inference*.

Suppose there is a requirement of predicting possibility of a new observation *Xn*+1 given previous sample *D* with note that *Xn*+1 is independent from *D*. In other words, we need to calculate the probability *P*(*Xn*+1 | *D*) called posterior predictive probability. Equation 4.2 specifies the posterior predictive probability (Heckerman, 1995, p. 6) (Wikipedia, Bayesian inference, 2006).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.2) |

According to equation 4.2, the posterior predictive probability *P*(*Xn*+1 | *D*) is expectation of the probability *P*(*Xn*+1 | Θ) given posterior distribution *P*(Θ | *D*). Equation 4.2 establishes a so-called *Bayesian prediction*. The probability *P*(*Xn*+1 | Θ, *ξ*) is always determined because it is probability of observation.

Given a sample *D* = {*X*1, *X*2,…, *Xn*), there is a requirement of estimating parameter (hypothesis) Θ according to Bayesian inference. Let denote a Bayesian estimate of Θ. The squared-error loss function is defined according to equation 4.3 (Walpole, Myers, Myers, & Ye, 2012, p. 717):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.3) |

The mean of posterior distribution *P*(Θ | *D*, *ξ*) is a Bayesian estimate of Θ under squared-error loss function, according to equation 4.4 (Walpole, Myers, Myers, & Ye, 2012, p. 717). In other words, such mean minimizes the squared-error loss function.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.4) |

The absolute loss function is defined according to equation 4.5 (Walpole, Myers, Myers, & Ye, 2012, p. 718):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.5) |

The median of posterior distribution *P*(Θ | *D*, *ξ*) is a Bayesian estimate of Θ under absolute loss function, according to equation 4.6 (Walpole, Myers, Myers, & Ye, 2012, p. 718). In other words, such median minimizes the absolute loss function.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.6) |

Therefore, equations 4.4 and 4.6 are two popular equations for *Bayesian parameter estimation*. If the posterior distribution *P*(Θ | *D*, *ξ*) is symmetric, these two equations produces the same estimate .

Now we survey a common case of Bayesian inference in which *D* is binominal sample. At that time which every *Xi* is binary random variable and the likelihood function *P*(*D* | Θ) becomes (Heckerman, 1995, p. 6):

Where *s* and *t* are the numbers of *Xi* = 1 and *Xi* = 0, respectively. The *s* and *t* are sufficient statistics of binomial sampling. Hence, Θ = *P*(*Xi* = 1) is the probability of *Xi* = 1. Equation 4.7 (Heckerman, 1995, p. 6), which is a special case of equation 4.1, specifies Bayesian inference (posterior probability of Θ) in case of binominal sampling.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.7) |

Derived from equation 4.2, the posterior predictive probability *P*(*Xn*+1 = 1 | *D*) in case of binomial sampling becomes (Heckerman, 1995, p. 6):

Due to:

Equation 4.8, which is a variant of equation 4.2, specifies the posterior predictive probability *P*(*Xn*+1 = 1 | *D*) in case of binomial sampling (Heckerman, 1995, p. 6).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.8) |

Where *E*(Θ | *D*, *ξ*) denotes the expectation of Θ given the posterior probability *P*(Θ | *D*, *ξ*) specified by equation 4.7.

Suppose Θ is distributed according to beta distribution, its prior probability is specified by equation 4.9.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.9) |

Where,

So *ξ* = (*a*, *b*) are two parameters of such prior beta distribution. Note, we use two notations “beta” and “*β*” to denote beta distribution. Note, Γ(.) denotes gamma function (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 298) which is essentially an integral approximated to factorial function according to equation 4.10.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.10) |

It is conventional that *e*(.) and *exp*(.) denote exponent function and *e*2.71828 is Euler’s number. If *x* is positive integer, gamma function in equation 4.10 is equivalent to factorial function,

There is an important property of gamma function which is expressed as follows (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 298):

Figure 4.1 shows beta density function with various parameters *a* and *b*. Beta functions *β*(*x*;2,2), *β*(*x*;4,2), and *β*(*x*;2,4) are drawn as black line, green line, and red line, respectively.



**Figure 4.1.** Beta density functions with various parameters *a* and *b*

In beta density function, there are “*a*” successful outcomes (for example, *x* =1) in “*a+b*” trials. The higher value of “*a*” is, the higher ratio of success is, so, the graph leans forward right. The higher value of “*a+b*” is, the more the mass concentrates around *a*/(*a+b*) and the more narrow the graph is.

The theoretical mean and variance of beta distribution is specified by equation 4.11.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.11) |

Where *N* = *a* + *b*. The marginal probability *P*(*D*) is calculated as follows:

Where *M* = *s* + *t*. Shortly, equation 4.12 specifies the marginal probability *P*(*D*).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.12) |

The posterior probability of Θ is re-calculated as follows:

Therefore, in case of binomial sampling, if the prior probability of Θ conforms beta distribution beta(Θ | *a*, *b*) then, the posterior probability of Θ conforms beta distribution beta(Θ | *a* + *s*, *b* + *t*), which is a beautiful result according to equation 4.13 (Heckerman, 1995, p. 7).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.13) |

Equation 4.13 is the special case of equation 4.7 in case of beta prior distribution. Equation 4.14 (Heckerman, 1995, p. 7) specifies the posterior predictive probability *P*(*Xn*+1 = 1 | *D*) in case of binomial sampling and prior beta distribution.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.14) |

Sub-sections 4.1 and 4.2 mentions how to learn CPTs of BN in which sub-section 4.1 focuses on parameter learning in complete data whereas sub-section 4.2 focuses on parameter learning in incomplete data. In sub-sections 4.1 and 4.2, nodes in BN are binary random variables and data sample is binomial sample. Recall that the report focuses on discrete BN.

## 4.1. Parameter learning in complete data

Suppose there is one binary variable *X* in BN and the probability distribution of *X* is considered as relative frequency having values in space [0, 1] which is the range of variable *F*. A dummy variable *F* (whose space consists of numbers in [0, 1], of course) is added to each variable *X*, which acts as the parent of *X* and has a beta density function *β*(*F*; a, b), so as to:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *P*(*X*=1 | *F*) = *F*, where *F* has beta density function *β*(*F*; *a*, *b*) | (4.1.1) |

Please pay attention to equation 4.1.1, *P*(*X=*1 *| F*)= *F* implicating that *F* representsrelative frequency of *X* (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 301) because it is the key of learning CPT based on beta density function. Variables *X* and *F* constitute a simple network which is referred as augmented BN (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 324). So, *X* is referred as real variable (hypothesis) opposite to dummy variable *F*. When hypothesis variable *X* is attached by variable *F* then, variable *F*, the probability *P*(*X=*1|*F*)= *F*, and beta function *β*(*F* | *a*, *b*) share the same purpose and all of them represent CPT of *X*. Figure 4.1.1 shows the simplest augmented BN. Therefore, we use binomial sample to learn BN and variable *F* is the parameter Θ when Θ is considered as random variable in Bayesian approach, *F* = Θ.

**Figure 4.1.1.** The simple (binomial) augmented BN with only one hypothesis node *X*

The probability *P*(*X* = 1) which is parameter of BN is really the prior predictive probability and so we have a simple but effective equation 4.1.2 to compute *P*(*X* = 1) as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.1.2) |

Following is the proof of equation 4.1.2.

*Proof.*

Please refer to equation 4.11 to know how to calculate the mean of beta distribution. Please pay attention to equation 4.1.2, it is the most essential equation used in parameter learning. The equation 4.1.2 is corollary 6.1 in (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 302).

The ultimate purpose of Bayesian inference is to consolidate a hypothesis (namely, variable) by collecting evidences. Suppose we perform *M* trials of a random process, the outcome of *uth* trial is denoted *X*(*u*) considered as evidence variable whose probability *P*(*X*(*u*)= 1 *| F*)= *F*. So, all *X*(*u*) are conditionally dependent on *F*. The probability of variable *X*, *P*(*X=*1) is learned by these evidences. Note that evidence *X*(*u*) is considered as random variable like *X*.

We denote the vector of all evidences as  *=* (*X*(1), *X*(2),…, *X*(*m*)) which is also called the sample of size *m*. Hence, is known as a *sample* or an *evidence vector* and we often implicate as a collection of evidences. Given this sample, *β*(*F*) is called prior density function, and *P*(*X*(*u*) = 1) = *a*/*N* (due to equation 4.1.2) is called prior probability of *X*(*u*). *It is necessary to determine the posterior density function β*(*F|*) *and the posterior probability of X, namely P*(*X|*)*. The nature of this process is the parameter learning*. Note that *P*(*X|*) can be referred as *P*(*X*(*m+*1) *|* ). Figure 4.1.2 depicts this sample  *=* (*X*(1), *X*(2),…, *X*(*m*)).

**Figure 4.1.2.** The binomial sample *=*(*X*(1), *X*(2),…, *X*(*m*)) of size *m*

We only survey the case of binomial sample. Thus, having binomial distribution is called binomial sample and the network in figure 4.1.1 becomes a binomial augmented BN. Then, suppose *s* is the number of all evidences *X*(*i*) which have value 1 (success), otherwise, *t* is the number of all evidences *X*(*j*) which have value 0 (failed). Of course, *s* + *t* = *M*. Note that *s* and *t* are often called counters or count numbers.

**Computing posterior density function and posterior probability**

Now, we need to compute the posterior density function *β*(*F|*) and the posterior probability *P*(*X=*1|). It is essential to determine the probability distribution of *X*. Fortunately, *β*(*F|*) and *P*(*X=*1|) are already determined by equations 4.12 and 4.13 when *F* = Θ and *P*(*X=*1|) = *P*(*Xn*+1*=*1|). For convenience, we replicate equations 4.12 and 4.13 as equations 4.1.3 and 4.1.4, respectively.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.1.3) |
|  | (4.1.4) |

Equation 4.1.4 is theorem 6.4 in (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 309). In general, you should merely remember the equations 4.1.2 and 4.1.4 to calculate prior probability of *X* and posterior probability of *X*, respectively.

**Expanding augmented BN with more than one hypothesis node**

Suppose we have a BN with two binary random variables and there is conditional dependence assertion between these nodes. Note, a BN having more than one hypothesis variable is known as multi-node BN. See the networks and CPT (s) in following figure 4.1.3 (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 329):

**Figure 4.1.3.** BN (a) and complex augmented BN (b)

In figure 4.1.3, the BN (a) having no attached dummy variable is also called original BN or trust BN, from which augmented BN (b) is derived by the way: for every node (variable) *Xi*, we add dummy parent nodes to *Xi*, obeying two principles below:

1. If *Xi* has no parent (not conditionally dependent on any others, *Xi* is a root), we add only one dummy variable denoted *Fi*1having the probability density function *β*(*Fi*1; *ai*1, *bi*1) so as to *P*(*Xi=*1*|Fi*1) *= Fi*1.
2. If *Xi* has a set of *ki* parent nodes and each parent node is binary, we add a set of *ci=*2*ki* dummy variables {*Fi*1, *Fi*2,…, } which, in turn, correspond to instances of parentnodes of *Xi*,namely{*PAi*1, *PAi*2, *PAi*3,…,} where each *PAij* is an instance of a parent node of *Xi* with note that each binary parent node has two instances (0 and 1, for example). For convenience, each *PAij* is called a parent instance of *Xi* and we let *PAi=*{*PAi*1, *PAi*2, *PAi*3,…,} be the vector or collection of parent instances of *Xi*. We also let *Fi*={*Fi*1, *Fi*2,…, } be the respective vector or collection of dummy variables *Fi*1 (s) attached to *Xi*. It is conventional that each *Xi* has *ci* parent instances ; in other words, *ci* denotes the size of *PAi* and the size of *Fi*. For example, in figure 4.1.3, node *X*2 has one parent node *X*1, which causes that *X*2 has two parent instances represented by two dummy variables *F*21 and *F*22. Additionally, *F*21 (*F*22) and its beta density function specify conditional probabilities of *X*2 given *X*1 = 1 (*X*1 = 0) because parent node *X*1 is binary. We have equation 4.1.5 for connecting CPT of variable *Xi* with beta density function of dummy variable *Fi*.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.1.5) |

Equation 4.1.5 is an extension of equation 4.1.1 in multi-node BN and equation 4.1.5 degenerates to equation 4.1.1 if *Xi* has no parent. Note that the beta density function of *Fij* is *β*(*Fij*; *aij*, *bij*) and of course, in figure 4.1.3, we have *a*11=1, *b*11=1, *a*21=1, *b*21=1, *a*22=1, *b*22=1.

The beta density function for each *Fij* is specified in equation 4.1.6 as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.1.6) |

Where *Nij* = *aij* + *bij*. Note that equations 4.9 and 4.1.6 have the same meaning for representing beta function except that equation 4.1.6 is used in multi-node BN. Variables *Fij* (s) attached to the same *Xi* have no parent and are mutually independent, so, it is very easy to compute the joint beta density function *β*(*Fi*1, *Fi*2,…, ) with regard to node *Xi* as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.1.7) |

Besides the local parameter independence expressed in equation 4.1.7, we have global parameter independence if reviewing all variables *Xi* (s) with note that all respective *Fij* (s) over entire augmented BN are mutually independent. Equation 4.1.8 expresses the global parameter independence of all *Fij* (s).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.1.8) |

Concepts “local parameter independence” and “global parameter independence” are defined in (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 333).

All variables *Xi* and their dummy variables form the complex augmented BN representing the trust BN in figure 4.1.3. In the trust BN, the conditional probability of variable *Xi* with respect to its parent instance *PAij*, in other words, the *ijth* conditional distribution is the expected value of *Fij* as below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.1.9) |

The equation 4.1.9 is extension of equation 4.1.2 when variable *Xi* has parent and both equations express prior probability of variable *Xi*. Following is proof of equation 4.1.9.

(due to local parameter independence specified in equation 4.1.7 when *Fij* (s) are mutually independent)

The equation 4.1.9 is theorem 6.7 proved by the similar way in (Neapolitan, 2003, pp. 334-335) to which I referred. For illustrating equations 4.1.5 and 4.1.9, recall that variables *Fij* (s) and their beta density functions *β*(*Fij*) (s) specify conditional probabilities of *Xi* (s) as in figure 4.1.3, and so, the CPT (s) in figure 4.1.3 is interpreted in detailed as follows:

Note that inverted probabilities in CPT (s) such as *P*(*X*1=0), *P*(*X*2=0*|X*1=1) and *P*(*X*2=0*|X*1=0) are not mentioned because *Xi* (s) are binary variables and so, *P*(*X*1=0) = 1 – *P*(*X*1=1) = 1/2, *P*(*X*2=0*|X*1=1) = 1 – *P*(*X*2=1*|X*1=1) = 1/2 and *P*(*X*2=0*|X*1=0) = 1 – *P*(*X*2=1*|X*1=0) = 1/2.

Suppose we perform *m* trials of random process, the outcome of *uth* trial which is BN like figure 4.1.3 is represented as a random vector *X*(*u*) containing all evidence variables in network. Vector *X*(*u*) is also called the *uth* *evidence* (vector) of entire BN. Suppose *X*(*u*) has *n* components or partial evidences *Xi*(*u*) when BN has *n* nodes; in figure 4.1.3, *n* = 2. Note that evidence *Xi*(*u*) is considered as random variable like *Xi*.

It is easy to recognize that each component *Xi*(*u*) represents the *uth* evidence of node *Xi* in the BN. The *m* trials constitute the sample of size *m* which is the set of random vectors denoted as *=*{*X*(1), *X*(2),…, *X*(*m*)}. is also called *evidence matrix* or *evidence sample* or *training data* or *evidences*, in brief. We only review the case of binomial sample; it means that is the binomial BN sample of size *m*. For example, this sample corresponding to the network in figure 4.1.3 is depicted by figure 4.1.4 as below (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 337):

**Figure 4.1.4.** Expanded binomial BN sample of size *m*

After *m* trials are performed, the augmented BN are updated and so, dummy variables’ density functions and hypothesis variables’ conditional probabilities are changed. We need to compute the posterior density function *β*(*Fij|*) of each dummy variable *Fij* and the posterior condition probability *P*(*Xi=*1*| PAij*,) of each variable *Xi*. Note that evidence vectors *X*(*u*) (s) are mutually independent given all *Fij* (s). It is easy to infer that given fixed *i*, all evidences *Xi*(*u*) corresponding to variable *Xi* are mutually independent. Based on binomial trials and mentioned mutual independence, equation 4.1.10 is used for calculating probability of evidences corresponding to variable *Xi* over *m* trials as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.1.10) |

Where,

* Number *ci* is the number of parent instances of *Xi*. In binary case, each *Xi*(*u*) ‘s parent node has two instances/values, namely, 0 and 1.
* Counter *sij*, respective to *Fij*, is the number of all evidences among *m* trials such that variable *Xi* = 1 and *PAij* = 1. Counter *tij*, respective to *Fij*, is the number of all evidences among *m* trials such that variable *Xi* = 1 and *PAij* = 0. Note that *sij* and *tij* are often called *counters* or *count numbers*.
* *PAi=*{*PAi*1, *PAi*2, *PAi*3,…,} is the vector of parent instances of *Xi* and *Fi* = {*Fi*1, *Fi*2,…, } is the respective vector of variables *Fi*1 (s) attached to *Xi*.

From equation 4.1.10, it is easy to compute conditional probability *P*(*|F*1, *F*2,…, *Fn*) of evidence sample given *n* vectors *Fi* (s) with assumption that BN has *n* variables *Xi* (s) as follows:

(because evidence vectors *X*(*u*) (s) are mutually independent)

(due to Bayes’ rule specified in equation 1.1)

(applying multiplication rule specified by equation 1.3 into the numerator)

(because *Xi*(*u*) (s) are mutually independent given *Fi* (s) and each *Xi* depends only on *PAi* and *Fi*)

In brief, we have equation 4.1.11 for calculating conditional probability *P*(*|F*1, *F*2,…, *Fn*) of evidence sample given *n* vectors *Fi* (s).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.1.11) |

The equation 4.1.11 is lemma 6.8 proved by similar way in (Neapolitan, 2003, pp. 338-339) to which I referred. It is necessary to calculate the whole probability *P*() of evidence sample , we have:

(due evidence vectors *X*(*u*) (s) are independent)

(due to total probability rule in continuous case, please see equation 1.5)

(Because *Xi*(*u*) (s) are mutually independent given *Fi* (s) and each *Xi* depends only on *PAi* and *Fi*. Moreover, all *Fi* (s) are mutually independent)

In brief, we have equation 4.1.12 for determining the whole probability *P*() of evidence sample as product of expectations of binomial trials.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.1.12) |

Equation 4.1.12 is theorem 6.11 in (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 343). There is the question “how to determine in equation 4.1.12” and so we have equation 4.1.13 for calculating this expectation by extending equation 4.12, as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.1.13) |

Where *Nij=aij+bij* and *Mij=sij+tij*. When both condition probability *P*(*|F*1, *F*2,…, *Fn*) and whole probability *P*() for evidences are determined, it is easy to update the posterior density function and posterior probability which are main subjects of learning parameters or CPT evolution.

**Updating posterior density function and posterior probability in multi-node BN**

Now, we need to compute the posterior density function *β*(*Fij|*) and the posterior probability *P*(*Xi=*1*|PAij*, ) for each variable *Xi* in BN. In fact, we have:

(due to Bayes’ rule specified in equation 1.1)

(Due to total probability rule in continuous case, specified by equation 1.5. Note that *Fi* = {*Fi*1, *Fi*2,…, })

(due to equation 4.1.11)

(applying equation 4.1.12 into denominator)

(applying definition of beta density function specified by equation 4.9 into numerator and applying equation 4.1.13 into denominator, note that *Nij* = *aij* + *bij* and *Mij* = *sij* + *tij*)

(due to definition of beta density function specified in equation 4.9)

In brief, we have equation 4.1.14 for calculating posterior beta density function *β*(*Fij|*).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.1.14) |

Note that equation 4.1.14 is an extension of equation 4.1.3 in case of multi-node BN. Equation 4.1.14 is corollary 6.7 proved by similar way in (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 347) to which I referred. Applying equations 4.1.9 and 4.1.14, it is easy to specify the posterior probability *P*(*Xi=*1*|PAij*, ) of variable *Xi* given its parent instance *PAij* as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4.1.15) |

Where *Nij=aij+bij* and *Mij=sij+tij*. It is easy to recognize that equation 4.1.15 is an extension of equation 4.1.4 in case of multi-node BN. In general, in case of binomial distribution, if we have the real/trust BN embedded in the expanded augmented network like figure 4.1.3 and each dummy node *Fij* has a prior beta distribution *β*(*Fij*; *aij*, *bij*) and each hypothesis node *Xi* has the prior conditional probability *P*(*Xi=*1*|PAij*) = *E*(*Fij*) = , the parameter learning process based on a set of evidences is to update the posterior density function *β*(*Fij|*) and the posterior conditional probability *P*(*Xi=*1*|PAij*,). Indeed, we have *β*(*Fij|*) = *beta*(*Fij*; *aij+sij*, *bij+tij*) and *P*(*Xi=*1*|PAij*,) = *E*(*Fij|*) = .

**Example of parameter learning based on beta density function**

Suppose we have the set of 5 evidences *=*{*X*(1)*, X*(2)*, X*(3)*, X*(4)*, X*(5)} owing to network in figure 4.1.3. Evidence sample (evidence matrix) is shown in table 4.1.1 (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 358).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | *X*1 | *X*2 |
| ***X*(1)** | *X*1(1) = 1 | *X*2(1) = 1 |
| ***X*(2)** | *X*1(2) = 1 | *X*2(2) = 1 |
| ***X*(3)** | *X*1(3) = 1 | *X*2(3) = 1 |
| ***X*(4)** | *X*1(4) = 1 | *X*2(4) = 0 |
| ***X*(5)** | *X*1(5) = 0 | *X*2(5) = 0 |

**Table 4.1.1.** Evidence sample corresponding to 5 trials (sample of size 5)

In order to interpret evidence sample in table 4.1.1, for instance, the first evidence (vector) implies that variable *X*2=1 given *X*1=1 occurs in the first trial. We need to compute all posterior density functions *β*(*F*11|), *β*(*F*21|), *β*(*F*22|) and all posterior conditional probabilities *P*(*X*1=1*|*), *P*(*X*2=1*|X*1=1,), *P*(*X*2=1*|X*1=0,) from prior density functions *β*(*F*11; 1,1), *β*(*F*21; 1,1), *β*(*F*22; 1,1). As usual, letcounter *sij* (*tij*) be the number of evidences among 5 trials such that variable *Xi* = 1 and *PAij* = 1 (*PAij* = 0), the following table 4.1.2 shows counters *sij*, *tij* (s) and posterior density functions calculated based on these counters; please see equation 4.1.14 for more details about updating posterior density functions. For instance, the number of rows (evidences) in table 4.1.1 such that *X*2=1 given *X*1=1 is 3, which causes *s*21 = 3 in table 4.1.2.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *s*11=1+1+1+1+0=4 | *t*11=0+0+0+0+1=1 |
| *s*21=1+1+1+0+0=3 | *t*21=0+0+0+0+1=1 |
| *s*22=0+0+0+0+0=0 | *t*21=0+0+0+0+1=1 |
| *β*(*F*11|) = *β*(*F*11; *a*11+*s*11, *b*11+*t*11)*= β*(*F*11; 1+4, 1+1)*= β*(*F*11; 5, 2)  *β*(*F*21|) = *β*(*F*21; *a*21+*s*21, *b*21+*t*21)*= β*(*F*21; 1+3, 1+1)*= β*(*F*11; 4, 2)  *β*(*F*22|) = *β*(*F*22; *a*22+*s*22, *b*22+*t*22)*= β*(*F*22; 1+0, 1+1)*= β*(*F*11; 1, 2) | |

**Table 4.1.2.** Posterior density functions calculated based on count numbers *sij* and *tij*

When posterior density functions are determined, it is easy to compute posterior conditional probabilities *P*(*X*1=1*|*), *P*(*X*2=1|*X*1=1,),and *P*(*X*2=1|*X*1=0,) as conditional expectations of *F*11, *F*21, and *F*22, respectively according to equation 4.1.15. Table 4.1.3 expresses such posterior conditional probabilities as evolutional CPT (s) of *X*1 and *X*2.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Table 4.1.3.** Updated CPT (s) of *X*1 and *X*2

Note that inverted probabilities in CPT (s) such as *P*(*X*1=0*|*), *P*(*X*2=0*|X*1=1,) and *P*(*X*2=0*|X*1=0,) are not mentioned because *Xi* (s) are binary variables and so, *P*(*X*1=0*|*) = 1 – *P*(*X*1=1*|*) = 2/7, *P*(*X*2=0*|X*1=1,) = 1 – *P*(*X*2=1*|X*1=1,) = 1/3 and *P*(*X*2=0*|X*1=0,) = 1 – *P*(*X*2=1*|X*1=0,) = 2/3.

Now BN in figure 4.1.3 is updated based on evidence sample and it is converted into the evolved BN with full of CPT (s) shown in figure 4.1.5 as follows:

**Figure 4.1.5.** Updated version of BN (a) and augmented BN (b)

It is easy to perform parameter learning by counting numbers *sij* and *tij* among sample according to expectation of beta density function as in equation 4.1.4 and 4.1.15 but a problem occurs when data in sample is missing. This problem is solved by expectation maximization (EM) algorithm mentioned in next sub-section 4.2.

## 4.2. Parameter learning in incomplete data

In practice there are some evidences in such as *X*(*u*) (s) which lack information and thus, it stimulates the question “How to update network from missing data”. We must address this problem by artificial intelligence techniques, namely, Expectation Maximization (EM) algorithm – a famous technique solving estimation of missing data. EM algorithm has two steps such as Expectation step (E-step) and Maximization step (M-step), which aims to improve parameters after a number of iterations; please read (Borman, 2004) for more details about EM algorithm. We will know thoroughly these steps by reviewing above example shown in table 4.1.1, in which there is the set of 5 evidences *=*{*X*(1)*, X*(2)*, X*(3)*, X*(4)*, X*(5)} along with network in figure 4.1.3 but the evidences *X*(2) and *X*(5) have not data yet. Table 4.2.1 shows such missing data (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 359).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | *X*1 | *X*2 |
| ***X*(1)** | *X*1(1) = 1 | *X*2(1) = 1 |
| ***X*(2)** | *X*1(2) = 1 | *X*2(2) =***v*1?** |
| ***X*(3)** | *X*1(3) = 1 | *X*2(3) = 1 |
| ***X*(4)** | *X*1(4) = 1 | *X*2(4) = 0 |
| ***X*(5)** | *X*1(5) = 0 | *X*2(5) =***v*2?** |

**Table 4.2.1.** Evidence sample with missing data

As known,count numbers *s*21, *t*21and *s*22, *t*22can’t be computed directly, it means that it is not able to compute directly the posterior density functions *β*(*F*11|), *β*(*F*21|), and *β*(*F*22|). It is necessary to determine missing values *v*1 and *v*2. Because *v*1 and *v*2 are binary values (1 and 0), we calculate their occurrences. So, evidence *X*(2) is split into two *X*‘(2*)* (s) corresponding to two values 1 and 0 of *v*1. Similarly, evidence *X*(5) is split into two *X*‘(5*)* (s) corresponding to two values 1 and 0 of *v*2. Table 4.2.2 shows new split evidences for missing data.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *X*1 | *X*2 | #Occurrences |
| ***X*(1)** | *X*1(1) = 1 | *X*2(1) = 1 | 1 |
| ***X*‘(2)** | *X*1’(2) = 1 | *X*2’(2) = 1 | #*n*11 |
| ***X*‘(2)** | *X*1’(2) = 1 | *X*2’(2) = 0 | #*n*10 |
| ***X*(3)** | *X*1(3) = 1 | *X*2(3) = 1 | 1 |
| ***X*(4)** | *X*1(4) = 1 | *X*2(4) = 0 | 1 |
| ***X*‘(5)** | *X*1’(5) = 0 | *X*2’(5) = 1 | #*n*21 |
| ***X*‘(5)** | *X*1’(5) = 0 | *X*2’(5) = 0 | #*n*20 |

**Table 4.2.2.** New split evidences for missing data

The number #*n*11 (#*n*10) of occurrences of *v*1=1(*v*1=0)is estimated by the probability of *X*2 = 1 given *X*1 = 1 (*X*2 = 0 given *X*1 = 1) with assumption that *a*21 = 1 and *b*21 = 1 as in figure 4.1.3.

Similarly, the number #*n*21 (#*n*20) of occurrences of *v*2=1(*v*2=0)is estimated by the probability of *X*2 = 1 given *X*1 = 0 (*X*2 = 0 given *X*1 = 0) with assumption that *a*22 = 1 and *b*22 = 1 as in figure 4.1.3.

When #*n*11, #*n*10, #*n*21, and #*n*20 are determined, missing data is filled fully and evidence sample is completed as in table 4.2.3.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *X*1 | *X*2 | #Occurrences |
| ***X*(1)** | *X*1(1) = 1 | *X*2(1) = 1 | 1 |
| ***X*‘(2)** | *X*1’(2) = 1 | *X*2’(2) = 1 | 1/2 |
| ***X*‘(2)** | *X*1’(2) = 1 | *X*2’(2) = 0 | 1/2 |
| ***X*(3)** | *X*1(3) = 1 | *X*2(3) = 1 | 1 |
| ***X*(4)** | *X*1(4) = 1 | *X*2(4) = 0 | 1 |
| ***X*‘(5)** | *X*1’(5) = 0 | *X*2’(5) = 1 | 1/2 |
| ***X*‘(5)** | *X*1’(5) = 0 | *X*2’(5) = 0 | 1/2 |

**Table 4.2.3.** Complete evidence sample in E-step of EM algorithm

In general, the essence of this task – estimating missing values by *expectations* of *F*21 and *F*22 based on previous parameters *a*21, *b*21, *a*22, and *b*22 of beta density functions is E-step in EM algorithm. Of course, in E-step, when missing values are estimated, it is easy to determine counters *s*11, *t*11, *s*21, *t*21, *s*22, and *t*22. Recall that counters *s*11 and *t*11 are numbers of evidences such that *X*1 = 1 and *X*1 = 0, respectively. Counters *s*21 and *t*21 (*s*22 and *t*22) are numbers of evidences such that *X*2 = 1 and *X*2 = 0 given *X*1 = 1 (*X*2 = 1 and *X*2 = 0 given *X*1 = 0), respectively. In fact, these counters are ultimate results of E-step. From complete sample in table 4.2.3, we have table 4.2.4 showing such ultimate results of E-step:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Table 4.2.4.** Counters *s*11, *t*11, *s*21, *t*21, *s*22, and *t*22 from estimated values (of missing values)

The next step of EM algorithm, M-step is responsible for updating posterior density functions *β*(*F*11|), *β*(*F*21|), and *β*(*F*22|), which leads to update posterior probabilities *P*(*X*1=1*|*), *P*(*X*2=1*|X*1=1,),and *P*(*X*2=1*|X*1=0,), based on current counters *s*11, *t*11, *s*21, *t*21, *s*22, and *t*22 from complete evidence sample (table 4.2.3). Table 4.2.5 shows results of M-step which are posterior density functions *β*(*F*11|), *β*(*F*21|), and *β*(*F*22|) along with posterior probabilities (updated CPT) such as *P*(*X*1=1*|*), *P*(*X*2=1*|X*1=1,),and *P*(*X*2=1*|X*1=0,).

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Table 4.2.5.** Posterior density functions and posterior probabilities are updated in M-step of EM algorithm

Note that origin parameters such as *a*11=1, *b*11=1, *a*21=1, *b*21=1, *a*22=1, and *b*22=1 (see figure 4.1.3) are kept intact in the task of updating posterior density functions *β*(*F*11|), *β*(*F*21|), and *β*(*F*22|). For example, *β*(*F*11|) = *β*(*F*11; *a*11+*s*11,*b*11+*t*11) = *β*(*F*11; 1+4,1+1) = *β*(*F*11; 5,2). After the updating task, these parameters are changed into new values; concretely, *a*11=5, *b*11=2, *a*21=7/2, *b*21=5/2, *a*22=3/2, and *b*22=3/2. These parameters updated with new values, which are called posterior parameters, are in turn used for the new iteration of EM algorithm.

The process of such two steps (E-step and M-step) repeated more and more brings out the EM algorithm. In general, EM algorithm is the iterative algorithm having many iterations and each iteration has two steps: E-step and M-step. Given the *kth* iteration in EM algorithm whose two steps such as E-step and M-step are summarized as follows:

1. *E-step*. Missing values are estimated based on expectations of *Fij* with regard to previous ((*k–*1)*th*) parameters *aij* and *bij*. Current (*kth*) counters *sij* and *tij* are calculated with estimated values (of such missing values). Table 4.2.4 shows such current counters which are ultimate results of E-step.
2. *M-step*. Posterior density functions andposterior probabilities (CPT) are updated based on current (*kth*) counters *sij* and *tij*. Of course, *aij* and *bij* are updated because they are parameters of (beta) density functions. Table 4.2.5 shows results of M-step. Terminating algorithm if stop condition becomes true, otherwise, reiterating step 1. The stop condition may be “posterior density functions andposterior probabilities are not changed significantly”, “the number of iterations approaches *k times*”or “there is no missing value”.

After *kth* iteration, the limit

will approach a certain limit. Note, the upper script (*k*) denotes the *kth* iteration. Don’t worry about the case of infinite iterations, we will obtain optimal probability *P*(*Xi=*1*|PAij*,) = if *k* is large enough. This limit is noted similarly as equation 6.17 in (Neapolitan, 2003, p. 361). EM algorithm for learning parameters in BN is also mentioned particularly in (Neapolitan, 2003, pp. 359-363).

Go backing the example of missing data, the results of EM algorithm at the first iteration are summarized from table 4.2.5, as follows:

When compared with the origin probabilities

There is significant change in these probabilities if the maximum deviation is pre-defined 0.05. It is easy for us to verify this assertion, concretely, |0.71 – 0.5| = 0.21 > 0.05. So it is necessary to run the EM algorithm at the second iteration.

At the second iteration, the E-step starts calculating the number #*n*11 (#*n*10) of occurrences of *v*1=1(*v*1=0)andthe number #*n*21 (#*n*20) of occurrences of *v*2=1(*v*2=0) again:

When #*n*11, #*n*10, #*n*21, and #*n*20 are determined, missing data is filled fully and evidence sample is completed as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *X*1 | *X*2 | #Occurrences |
| ***X*(1)** | *X*1(1) = 1 | *X*2(1) = 1 | 1 |
| ***X*‘(2)** | *X*1’(2) = 1 | *X*2’(2) = 1 | 7/12 |
| ***X*‘(2)** | *X*1’(2) = 1 | *X*2’(2) = 0 | 5/12 |
| ***X*(3)** | *X*1(3) = 1 | *X*2(3) = 1 | 1 |
| ***X*(4)** | *X*1(4) = 1 | *X*2(4) = 0 | 1 |
| ***X*‘(5)** | *X*1’(5) = 0 | *X*2’(5) = 1 | 1/2 |
| ***X*‘(5)** | *X*1’(5) = 0 | *X*2’(5) = 0 | 1/2 |

Recall that counters *s*11 and *t*11 are numbers of evidences such that *X*1 = 1 and *X*1 = 0, respectively. Counters *s*21 and *t*21 (*s*22 and *t*22) are numbers of evidences such that *X*2 = 1 and *X*2 = 0 given *X*1 = 1 (*X*2 = 1 and *X*2 = 0 given *X*1 = 0), respectively. These counters which are ultimate results of E-step are calculated as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

Posterior density functions *β*(*F*11|), *β*(*F*21|), and *β*(*F*22|), posterior probabilities *P*(*X*1=1*|*), *P*(*X*2=1*|X*1=1,),and *P*(*X*2=1*|X*1=0,) are updated at M-step as follows:

When compared with the previous probabilities

There is no significant change in these probabilities if the maximum deviation is pre-defined 0.05. It is easy for us to verify this assertion, concretely, |0.75 – 0.71| = 0.04 < 0.05, |0.61 – 0.58| = 0.03 < 0.05, and |0.5 – 0.5| = 0 < 0.05. So the EM algorithm is stopped with note that we can execute more iterations for EM algorithm in order to receive more precise results that posterior probabilities are stable . Consequently, the Bayesian network in figure 4.1.3 is converted into the evolutional version specified in figure 4.2.1.

**Figure 4.2.1.** Updated version of BN (a) and augmented BN (b) in case of missing data

In general, parameter learning is described thoroughly in this section. The next section mentions structure learning.

# 5. Structure learning

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (9.99) |

# 6. Applications

# 7. Conclusions

Three significant domains of Bayesian network (BN) are inference mechanism, parameter learning and structure learning. The first domain tells the usability of BN and the others indicates how to build up BN. The ideology of BN is to apply a mathematical inference tool (namely Bayesian rule) into a graph with expectation of extending and enhancing the ability of such tool so as to solve realistic problems, especially diagnosis domain.

However, in the process of developing BN, there are many problems involving in real number (continuous case) and nodes dependency. This report focuses on discrete case when the probability of each node is discrete CPT, not continuous PDF. The first-order Markov condition has important role in BN study when there is an assumption “nodes are dependent on only their direct parents”. If the first-order Markov condition isn’t satisfied, many inference and learning algorithms go wrong. I think that BN will get more potential and enjoyable if first-order (Markov) condition is replaced by *n-*order condition.

Moreover, the parameter & structure learning becomes difficult when training data is missing (not complete). Missing data problem is introduced in section 3 but its detail goes beyond this report. I hope that we have a chance to discuss about it.

Finally, BN discussed here is “static” BN because the temporal relationships among nodes aren’t concerned. The “static” BN is represented at only one time point. Otherwise dynamic Bayesian network (DBN) aims to model the temporal relationships among nodes. The process of inference is concerned in time series; in some realistic case this is necessary. However, the cost of inference and learning in DBN is much higher than BN because the size of DBN gets huge for long-time process. Because of the limitation of this report, the algorithm that keeps the size of DBN intact (not changed) isn’t introduced here. In general, the essence of such algorithm is to take advantage of both Markov condition and knowledge (inference) accumulation. Due to the complexity of DBN, we should consider to choose which one (BN or DBN) to apply into concrete domain. It depends on what your domain is and what your purpose is.

# References

Borman, S. (2004). *The Expectation Maximization Algorithm - A short tutorial.* University of Notre Dame, Department of Electrical Engineering. South Bend, Indiana: Sean Borman's Home Page.

Heckerman, D. (1995). *A Tutorial on Learning With Bayesian Networks.* Microsoft Corporation, Microsoft Research. Redmond: Microsoft Research. Retrieved from ftp://ftp.research.microsoft.com/pub/dtg/david/tutorial.ps

Montgomery, D. C., & Runger, G. C. (2003). *Applied Statistics and Probability for Engineers* (3rd Edition ed.). New York, NY, USA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Murphy, K. P. (1998). *A Brief Introduction to Graphical Models and Bayesian Networks.* Retrieved 2008, from Kevin P. Murphy's home page: http://www.cs.ubc.ca/~murphyk/Bayes/bnintro.html

Neapolitan, R. E. (2003). *Learning Bayesian Networks.* Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, USA: Prentice Hall.

Rosen, K. H. (2012). *Discrete Mathematics and Its Applications* (7nd Edition ed.). (M. Lange, Ed.) McGraw-Hill Companies.

Walpole, R. E., Myers, R. H., Myers, S. L., & Ye, K. (2012). *Probability & Statistics for Engineers & Scientists* (9th ed.). (D. Lynch, Ed.) Boston, Massachusetts, USA: Pearson Education, Inc.

Wikipedia. (2006). *Bayesian inference*. (Wikimedia Foundation) Retrieved 2007, from Wikipedia website: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bayesian\_inference

Wikipedia. (2014, October 29). *Sample (statistics)*. (Wikimedia Foundation) Retrieved October 31, 2014, from Wikipedia website: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sample\_(statistics)

Wikipedia. (2014, October 10). *Set (mathematics)*. (A. Rubin, Editor, & Wikimedia Foundation) Retrieved October 11, 2014, from Wikipedia website: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Set\_(mathematics)