



Definition

Suppose \mathcal{X} is a finite set. A distribution $p : \mathcal{X} \rightarrow [0, 1]$ is a *normalized exponential distribution* (also *Gibbs distribution*, *Boltzmann distribution*) if there exists a function $F : \mathcal{X} \rightarrow \mathbf{R}$ so that

$$p(x) = \frac{\exp(-F(x))}{\sum_{\xi \in \mathcal{X}} \exp(-F(\xi))} \quad \text{for all } x \in \mathcal{X}$$

The function F is sometimes called the *energy* (or *energy function*) of p .

