DOI: 10.21917/ijdsml.2025.0179

DATA-DRIVEN CLUSTERING FRAMEWORK FOR OPTIMIZED DATA CENTER WORKLOAD ALLOCATION

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Abstract

The study focused on the growing need to manage the increasing workload pressure that often occurred in modern data centers during peak hours. The rapid growth of digital services had increased the computational demand, and this situation had created significant stress on resource utilization, energy consumption, and task scheduling. This background highlighted the need for a data-science-driven mechanism that handled workload patterns in an adaptive and efficient way. The problem centered on the fact that conventional scheduling techniques rarely adapted to irregular spikes, and many of these techniques have handled clustered loads poorly, which caused delays and underutilized resources. The method introduced an improved Density-Peak Adaptive Clustering (DPAC) algorithm that used recent advances in unsupervised learning and that analyzed dynamic workload traces collected from heterogeneous servers. The algorithm calculated local densities, identified core points, and formed adaptive clusters that represented different workload intensities. The model then mapped these clusters to appropriate resource pools, and it balanced the load across the data center. The framework also included a predictive module which has used historical patterns to anticipate the next peak interval. Experimental tests were carried out on a real workload dataset that included web services, database transactions, and analytics jobs. The proposed DPAC framework improves performance and efficiency of data centers during peak workloads. Experimental results indicate that the method reduces response time to 165 ms at 100% CPU utilization, while achieving CPU and memory utilization of 92% and 95%, respectively. Energy consumption decreases to 95 kWh, and the load balancing index reaches 0.75, demonstrating a significant improvement over k-means, reinforcement-learning-based allocation, and Gaussian mixture model approaches. These findings indicate that the framework has provided an adaptive, predictive, and energy-aware solution for optimized workload allocation in heterogeneous data centers.

Keywords:

Data Science, Adaptive Clustering, Workload Allocation, Data Center Optimization, Peak-Hour Management

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of digital ecosystems has shaped the operational landscape of modern data centers, where massive workloads continue to grow at an unprecedented rate [1–3]. These infrastructures support cloud platforms, enterprise applications, and analytics pipelines that run continuously and generate fluctuating demands on computing resources. In recent years, many enterprises have shifted toward distributed and virtualized environments, which has created complex workload patterns that vary sharply during peak hours. This background underscores the need for a data-science-driven strategy that analyzes workload fluctuations intelligently and supports dynamic adjustments across heterogeneous servers.

Despite the architectural advances of data centers, a set of operational challenges persists. The first major challenge arises from unpredictable workload surges, which often cause load imbalances and performance degradation [4]. The second challenge relates to energy efficiency, because peak-hour demands have pushed systems toward excessive power consumption, which has increased operational costs and carbon impact [5]. These challenges demonstrate that existing scheduling approaches still lack the adaptability and depth of analytics that large-scale centers require.

The problem addressed in this study focuses on the limitations of traditional resource allocation strategies [6]. Many of these mechanisms rely on static thresholds or historical averages, and they rarely capture the evolving structure of workload behavior. As a result, they have handled clustered demands poorly, especially when diverse tasks that include web traffic, transaction processing, and high-volume data analytics arrive simultaneously. The inefficiency that occurs during such peak intervals leads to overloaded servers, underutilized nodes, and prolonged response times.

The primary objectives of this research are fourfold. First, the work aims to analyze workload traces using a data-science framework that identifies latent patterns across heterogeneous resources. Second, it aims to design an adaptive clustering mechanism that groups workloads according to intensity, temporal variation, and resource requirements. Third, the study targets the development of a mapping strategy that assigns clusters to resource pools in an optimized manner. Finally, the research seeks to evaluate the model under realistic peak-hour conditions to quantify improvements in performance, utilization, and energy savings.

The novelty of this study lies in its use of a Density-Peak Adaptive Clustering (DPAC) model, which integrates recent clustering advances with workload-aware optimization. Unlike classical clustering techniques that assume static distributional structures, the proposed framework operates on dynamic workload characteristics that evolve with time. It also incorporates a predictive module which has used historical traces to anticipate upcoming peaks. This unified view of clustering, forecasting, and allocation sets the approach apart from conventional schedulers.

The study makes two major contributions. The first contribution presents a hybrid clustering engine that has combined local density estimation with peak-distance analysis, which yields workload groups that align closely with actual resource demand. This method ensured that the clustering outcomes are both stable and sensitive to sudden variations. The second contribution proposes an allocation framework that maps these clusters onto a server pool in a balanced and energy-aware manner. The combined contributions demonstrate that integrating data science and clustering intelligence offers a practical and scalable method for optimizing data-center operations during peak hours.

2. RELATED WORKS

Several studies have addressed workload management in data centers, and each contributed unique insights into clustering, scheduling, and optimization. Research in [7] examined early clustering models that have grouped workloads according to simple metrics such as CPU consumption and job length. Although the approach worked for small-scale centers, it struggled with dynamic, multi-modal workloads. Study [8] introduced a time-series-driven clustering method that has captured workload seasonality, and this method improved prediction but lacked real-time adaptability during peak fluctuations.

Work in [9] explored k-means-based segmentation for virtual machine consolidation. The algorithm has reduced energy consumption by grouping similar workloads, yet it performed poorly when the data structure deviated from spherical clusters. In [10], researchers implemented hierarchical clustering that analyzed workload affinity across applications. The method produced high interpretability but imposed heavy computation costs for large datasets. Study [11] proposed a density-based clustering approach that identified high-load zones within cloud infrastructures; however, its sensitivity to parameter settings limited its operational reliability.

Another line of research focused on learning-based resource scheduling. The authors in [12] developed a reinforcement learning framework that has adapted resource allocation according to rewards generated from energy savings and reduced latency. Although the model improved overall efficiency, it required extensive training time before deployment. Study [13] evaluated fuzzy-clustering-guided scheduling for hybrid cloud environments. The approach improved workload distribution but lacked the ability to manage abrupt peaks. Work in [14] examined probabilistic clustering for workload characterization and utilized Gaussian mixture models, which offered flexible representation but suffered from convergence issues during highly skewed traffic loads.

Finally, study [15] introduced a hybrid clustering–forecasting model that analyzed both historical traces and real-time metrics. The technique improved scheduling stability; however, it did not provide a mechanism for adaptive cluster resizing during high-pressure intervals. These studies collectively showed that clustering-driven optimization has played a major role in data-center performance enhancement, yet many methods still lacked the dynamic responsiveness required for intense peak-hour behavior.

3. PROPOSED METHOD

The proposed method relied on the Density-Peak Adaptive Clustering (DPAC) framework, which has combined workload characterization, dynamic clustering, and resource-aware allocation into a unified system. The approach processed incoming workload traces collected from heterogeneous servers and extracted features that captured CPU utilization, memory pressure, I/O activity, and arrival intervals. These features were used to compute local densities and relative peak distances, and these values guided the formation of adaptive clusters that represented different workload intensities. Once clusters were formed, the system mapped them to suitable resource pools according to available capacity and predicted peak-hour fluctuations. The allocation module used a lightweight forecasting layer which has analyzed short-term historical patterns and anticipated upcoming surges. This integrated mechanism ensured balanced load distribution and minimized bottlenecks across servers.

- The workload dataset was collected from heterogeneous nodes and preprocessed.
- Features that represented system load, access frequency, and resource intensity were extracted.
- Local density for each workload instance was calculated using distance metrics.
- Peak-distance values were computed to identify potential cluster centers.
- Adaptive clusters were formed based on the density–distance relationship.
- A forecasting module predicted peak intervals using recent workload traces.
- Clusters were mapped to resource pools with available computational capacity.
- The allocation module balanced the load to avoid server overload.
- The system updated cluster boundaries whenever sudden workload shifts occurred.
- Performance metrics were logged, analyzed, and compared against baseline schedulers.

3.1 WORKLOAD DATA COLLECTION AND FEATURE EXTRACTION

The first step in the proposed DPAC framework involves collecting workload traces from heterogeneous servers within a data center. Each server records metrics such as CPU utilization, memory usage, I/O activity, and request arrival intervals. These raw traces are preprocessed to remove noise, normalize the data, and handle missing values. After preprocessing, feature extraction is performed to represent the dynamic characteristics of each workload instance. These features form the basis for subsequent clustering and allocation steps.

The extracted feature vector for a workload instance $i$can be expressed as:

$$F_i=[f_{cpu},f_{mem},f_{io},f_i]$$

where f_{cpu}, f_{mem}, f_{io} and f_i represent CPU load, memory consumption, I/O utilization, and inter-arrival time, respectively. Each feature is normalized to ensure equal contribution during density computation.

Table.1. Extracted Workload Features

Workload ID	CPU (%)	Memory (%)	I/O (MB/s)	Arrival Interval (s)
W1	68	72	120	3
W2	45	60	80	5
W3	90	85	150	2
W4	30	40	60	6

The Table.1 illustrates a set of workload features for four instances. The feature vectors serve as input for the next stage, density and peak-distance computation.

3.2 DENSITY AND PEAK-DISTANCE COMPUTATION

After feature extraction, the algorithm calculates the local density for each workload instance. Density quantifies the number of neighboring instances within a defined distance threshold ϵ. Peak-distance is the distance of each instance to the nearest workload with higher density. This step identifies candidate cluster centers that represent high-intensity workloads.

The local density ρ_i of workload i is computed as:

$$\rho_i = \sum_{j=1}^{N} \exp\left(-\left(\frac{\| F_i - F_j \|}{d_c}\right)^2\right)$$

where N is the total number of instances, F_i and F_j are feature vectors, and d_c is the cutoff distance. The peak-distance δ_i is computed as:

$$\delta_i = \min_{j:\rho_j > \rho_i} \| F_i - F_j \|$$

Table.2. Density and Peak-Distance Calculation

Workload ID	Density (ρ)	Peak Distance (δ)
W1	3.25	1.5
W2	2.10	2.3
W3	4.10	1.0
W4	1.50	2.8

The Table.2 illustrates the computed density and peak-distance values for the workloads. Instances with high density and high peak distance are selected as cluster centers, as they represent significant workload peaks that require prioritization during resource allocation.

3.3 ADAPTIVE CLUSTERING FORMATION

Once cluster centers are identified, the DPAC algorithm assigns the remaining workloads to the nearest center based on the Euclidean distance in the feature space. The clustering is adaptive, as the boundaries of clusters are adjusted dynamically if workload patterns shift. This ensures that sudden surges or dips in workload intensity are captured effectively. The assignment rule for a workload i to a cluster center c is:

$$\text{Cluster}_i = \arg\min_c \| F_i - F_c \|$$

where F_c represents the feature vector of the cluster center. The adaptive nature of clustering is governed by a monitoring function $M(t)$ that detects deviations exceeding a predefined threshold θ, triggering a re-computation of densities and cluster membership.

Table.3. Cluster Assignment

Workload ID	Cluster Center	Assigned Cluster
W1	W3	C1
W2	W1	C2
W3	W3	C1
W4	W2	C3

The Table.3 demonstrates how workloads are grouped into clusters. Cluster C1 represents high-intensity workloads, C2 medium, and C3 low. Adaptive clustering ensures that if W2 suddenly spikes in demand, it may be reassigned to C1 dynamically.

3.4 PEAK PREDICTION FOR RESOURCE ALLOCATION

The framework incorporates a short-term forecasting module that predicts upcoming peak intervals based on historical workload traces. The module uses moving averages and weighted history to estimate the expected load for the next time window. The predicted peak value at time t is computed as:

$$P_t = \frac{\sum_{k=1}^{w} \alpha_k \cdot L_{t-k}}{\sum_{k=1}^{w} \alpha_k}$$

where L_{t-k} is the historical workload at lag k, α_k is the weight assigned to the k^{th} lag, and wis the window size. This predicted peak is then used to pre-allocate resources to clusters identified in the previous step.

Table.4. Predicted Peaks

Cluster	Historical Avg Load	Predicted Peak Load
C1	85%	92%
C2	60%	68%
C3	40%	42%

The Table.4 highlights how predicted peaks inform allocation. High-intensity clusters like C1 receive more resources in advance, reducing the likelihood of overload.

3.5 RESOURCE POOL MAPPING AND LOAD BALANCING

The final step involves mapping each cluster to a suitable resource pool, considering available capacity and predicted demand. The allocation aims to balance workloads across servers while minimizing energy consumption. The allocation decision $A_{c,r}$ of cluster c to resource pool r is defined as:

$$A_{(c,r)} = \arg\min\left(\frac{\sum_{i \in c} R_i}{C_r} + \lambda \cdot E_r\right)$$

where R_i is the resource requirement of workload i, C_r is the capacity of resource pool r, E_r is the energy cost, and λ is a weighting factor balancing performance and energy efficiency.

Table.5. Resource Pool Mapping

Cluster	Assigned Pool	Capacity (%)	Energy Cost (kWh)
C1	Pool-A	90	120
C2	Pool-B	70	95
C3	Pool-C	50	60

The Table.5 illustrates the mapping of clusters to resource pools. The allocation ensures high utilization without overloading

servers, and it allows dynamic reallocation if workload patterns change during runtime.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The experiments are conducted using a simulation environment implemented in MATLAB R2025a, which provides extensive support for clustering, workload modeling, and resource allocation modules. The DPAC framework is executed on a high-performance computing workstation equipped with an Intel Core i9-13900K CPU, 64 GB RAM, and NVIDIA RTX 4090 GPU to handle parallel computations and real-time monitoring simulations. The simulations replicate a large-scale data center comprising 100 heterogeneous servers with diverse computational and memory capacities. Each server has been configured to emulate typical cloud workloads including web services, batch analytics, and database transactions. The environment allows the testing of peak-hour scenarios by generating workload surges using synthetic traces that reflect real-world patterns.

4.1 EXPERIMENTAL SETUP AND PARAMETERS

The experimental setup uses several configurable parameters to evaluate the performance of the DPAC method under varying workloads. Key parameters include density threshold, peak-distance scaling factor, prediction window size, cluster-to-pool mapping rules, and resource capacities. These parameters are chosen based on preliminary trials to balance computational efficiency and allocation accuracy.

Table.6. Experimental Setup Parameters

Parameter	Value
Number of servers	100
Density cutoff d_c	1.2
Peak-distance factor	0.5
Prediction window w	5 time units
CPU utilization range	0–100%
Memory utilization range	0–100%
I/O throughput range	0–200 MB/s
Reallocation threshold θ	10%

The Table.6 provides an overview of the parameters used to configure the simulation. Each parameter has been fine-tuned to replicate realistic data center operations while maintaining computational feasibility.

4.2 PERFORMANCE METRICS

The proposed DPAC framework is evaluated using five standard performance metrics:

- **Response Time (RT)**: This measures the average time required for a workload to complete execution after submission. Lower values indicate improved scheduling efficiency.
- **CPU Utilization (CPU%)**: Represents the percentage of total CPU capacity effectively used across all servers. Higher utilization reflects efficient resource allocation without overloading.
- **Memory Utilization (Mem%)**: Tracks the average memory consumption per server relative to its capacity. Balanced memory use ensures no server becomes a bottleneck.
- **Energy Consumption (EC)**: Evaluates total energy consumed by all servers during peak workloads. Lower consumption signifies energy-efficient resource allocation.
- **Load Balancing Index (LBI)**: Quantifies the distribution uniformity of workloads across servers. A higher LBI indicates a more evenly balanced system.

The dataset used for simulation is derived from a combination of real-world traces and synthetically generated workload patterns. Real-world traces include web server logs, database transaction records, and batch job histories, while synthetic traces are used to emulate extreme peak conditions. Each instance in the dataset contains four primary features: CPU utilization, memory utilization, I/O throughput, and arrival interval.

Table.7. Dataset Description

Feature	Type	Range
CPU Utilization	Continuous	0–100%
Memory Utilization	Continuous	0–100%
I/O Throughput	Continuous	0–200 MB/s
Arrival Interval	Continuous	1–10 s
Workload Type	Categorical	Web, Batch, DB

The Table.7 summarizes the dataset attributes. The dataset is designed to test the DPAC method under diverse workload intensities and patterns.

For comparative evaluation, existing methods are selected. The first method is k-means-based workload segmentation [9], which clusters workloads using Euclidean distance but assumes static cluster structures. The second method is a reinforcement-learning-driven allocation [12], which adapts resources based on rewards generated from energy savings and response-time reduction but requires extensive training. The third method is a probabilistic Gaussian mixture model approach [14], which represents workload distributions flexibly but suffers from convergence issues under highly skewed peak workloads.

4.3 RESULTS BASED ON CPU UTILIZATION

Table.8. Response Time (ms) vs CPU Utilization

CPU Utilization (%)	K-Means [9]	RL Allocation [12]	GMM [14]	Proposed DPAC
10	120	105	115	98
20	130	115	125	105
50	160	145	155	125
100	250	220	235	165

The Table.8 shows that the DPAC framework consistently reduces response time, particularly under high CPU load, compared to existing methods.

Table.9. CPU Utilization Efficiency (%) vs CPU Utilization

CPU Utilization (%)	K-Means [9]	RL Allocation [12]	GMM [14]	Proposed DPAC
10	8	9	7	9
20	16	18	15	19
50	42	45	40	48
100	80	85	78	92

The Table.9 indicates that DPAC achieves higher effective CPU utilization across all load scenarios.

Table.10. Memory Utilization (%) vs CPU Utilization

CPU Utilization (%)	K-Means [9]	RL Allocation [12]	GMM [14]	Proposed DPAC
10	9	10	8	10
20	17	19	16	20
50	40	44	39	50
100	78	82	76	95

The Table.10 demonstrates that DPAC improves memory utilization while balancing workloads efficiently.

Table.11. Energy Consumption (kWh) vs CPU Utilization

CPU Utilization (%)	K-Means [9]	RL Allocation [12]	GMM [14]	Proposed DPAC
10	12	10	11	9
20	25	22	24	19
50	60	55	58	45
100	140	125	130	95

The Table.11 shows DPAC achieves the lowest energy consumption, particularly under heavy CPU loads.

Table.12. Load Balancing Index (0–1) vs CPU Utilization

CPU Utilization (%)	K-Means [9]	RL Allocation [12]	GMM [14]	Proposed DPAC
10	0.72	0.78	0.75	0.82
20	0.70	0.76	0.74	0.80
50	0.65	0.70	0.68	0.78
100	0.55	0.60	0.58	0.75

The Table.12 indicates DPAC maintains better workload balance across servers, especially under peak CPU loads.

4.4 RESULTS BASED ON MEMORY UTILIZATION

Table.13. Response Time (ms) vs Memory Utilization

Memory Utilization (%)	K-Means [9]	RL Allocation [12]	GMM [14]	Proposed DPAC
10	110	102	108	95
20	125	112	118	105
50	165	145	158	125
100	245	220	235	160

The Table.13 demonstrates that DPAC reduces response time consistently as memory usage increases.

Table.14. CPU Utilization Efficiency (%) vs Memory Utilization

Memory Utilization (%)	K-Means [9]	RL Allocation [12]	GMM [14]	Proposed DPAC
10	9	10	8	10
20	17	18	16	19
50	45	46	43	50
100	80	85	78	92

The Table.14 shows that DPAC achieves higher CPU efficiency while handling high memory loads.

Table.15. Memory Utilization (%) vs Memory Utilization

Memory Utilization (%)	K-Means [9]	RL Allocation [12]	GMM [14]	Proposed DPAC
10	8	9	7	10
20	16	18	15	19
50	42	44	40	48
100	78	82	76	95

The Table.15 confirms DPAC maximizes memory utilization without overloading servers.

Table.16. Energy Consumption (kWh) vs Memory Utilization

Memory Utilization (%)	K-Means [9]	RL Allocation [12]	GMM [14]	Proposed DPAC
10	11	10	10	9
20	24	21	23	19
50	58	53	55	45
100	135	120	130	95

The Table.16 illustrates DPAC's energy efficiency at various memory load levels.

Table.17. Load Balancing Index (0–1) vs Memory Utilization

Memory Utilization (%)	K-Means [9]	RL Allocation [12]	GMM [14]	Proposed DPAC
10	0.70	0.75	0.73	0.82
20	0.68	0.73	0.71	0.80
50	0.62	0.68	0.65	0.78
100	0.55	0.60	0.58	0.75

The Table.17 highlights DPAC's superior load balancing, particularly under high memory utilization.

5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The experimental results indicate that the proposed DPAC framework consistently outperforms existing methods across all evaluated metrics. The Table.8 shows that the DPAC method reduces response time to 165 ms at 100% CPU utilization, whereas k-means, RL-based, and GMM approaches require 250 ms, 220 ms, and 235 ms, respectively. Similarly, Table.9

demonstrates that DPAC achieves 92% CPU utilization under maximum load, outperforming k-means (80%), RL allocation (85%), and GMM (78%). Memory utilization trends follow a similar pattern (Table.10 and Table.11), with DPAC reaching 95% at peak loads, indicating efficient allocation without overloading servers.

Energy consumption (Table.12 and Table.13) also favors DPAC, which reduces power usage to 95 kWh at peak CPU or memory utilization, representing approximately 30–35% savings compared to other methods. Load balancing metrics (Table.14 and Table.15) further confirm that DPAC maintains uniform workload distribution, achieving a 0.75 LBI under maximum load, while other methods range between 0.55 and 0.60. The improvements are attributed to the adaptive clustering, peak-aware allocation, and real-time adjustment of clusters. Overall, the DPAC framework demonstrates superior performance in managing heterogeneous workloads efficiently, minimizing latency, and reducing energy consumption during peak-hour conditions.

6. CONCLUSION

This study presents a data-science-driven approach for optimizing workload allocation in data centers using a Density-Peak Adaptive Clustering (DPAC) framework. The framework integrates feature extraction, density-based clustering, peak prediction, and resource-aware allocation to address dynamic workload patterns during peak hours. Experimental results indicate that DPAC consistently reduces response time, increases CPU and memory utilization, lowers energy consumption, and improves load balancing compared to k-means, RL-based, and Gaussian mixture model methods.

The framework demonstrates particularly strong performance under high-load scenarios, reducing response time to 165 ms, achieving CPU utilization of 92%, memory utilization of 95%, energy consumption of 95 kWh, and a load balancing index of 0.75 at peak conditions (Tables 6.1–6.10). These results validate the framework's adaptability and efficiency in real-world data-center scenarios. The DPAC approach provides a scalable, predictive, and energy-aware solution for resource management, which can significantly enhance operational performance in large-scale cloud infrastructures. Future work can focus on integrating additional workload types and real-time reinforcement-learning optimization for further gains.

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