

Constraint-Handling in Nature-Inspired Optimization

Efrén Mezura-Montes

Artificial Intelligence Research Center
University of Veracruz, MEXICO
emezura@uv.mx
<http://www.uv.mx/personal/emezura>



Universidad Veracruzana

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Introduction

- The problem of interest
- Some important concepts
- Mathematical-programming methods
- Why alternative methods?

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The early years

- Penalty functions
- Decoders
- Special operators
- Separation of objective function and constraints
- General comments

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Current constraint-handling techniques

- Feasibility rules
- Stochastic ranking
- ε -constrained method
- Novel penalty functions
- Novel special operators
- Multi-objective concepts
- Ensemble of constraint-handling techniques

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Summary and current trends

- A bird's eye view
- Current trends

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Constrained numerical optimization problem (CNOP)

Find \vec{x} which minimizes $f(\vec{x})$

subject to:

$$g_i(\vec{x}) \leq 0, \quad i = 1, \dots, m$$

$$h_j(\vec{x}) = 0, \quad j = 1, \dots, p$$

- $\vec{x} \in \mathbf{R}^n$ is the vector of solutions $\vec{x} = [x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n]^T$.
- Each $x_k, k = 1, \dots, n$ is bounded by lower and upper limits $L_k \leq x_k \leq U_k$ which define the search space \mathcal{S} .
- \mathcal{F} comprises the set of all solutions which satisfy the constraints of the problems and it is called the feasible region.
- To handle equality constraints they are transformed into inequality constraints as follows: $|h_j(\vec{x})| - \varepsilon \leq 0$.

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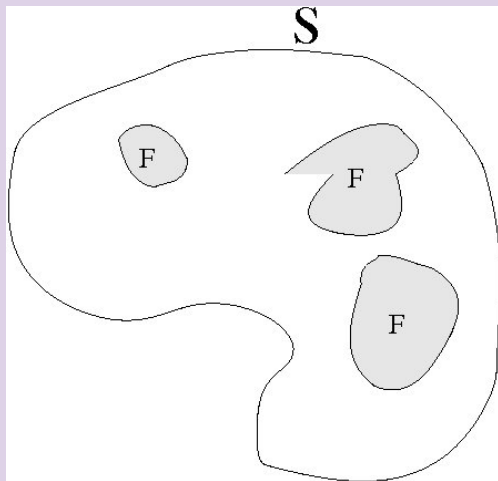
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Constrained numerical optimization problem

Constrained search space



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Feasible global optimum

In the following definitions we will assume minimization (without loss of generality). $\vec{x}^* = [x_1^*, x_2^*, \dots, x_n^*]^T$ refers to the feasible optimum point and its corresponding value of the objective function $f(\vec{x}^*)$ is called the feasible optimum value. The pair \vec{x}^* and $f(\vec{x}^*)$ is called feasible optimum solution.

Feasible global minimum

A function $f(\vec{x})$ defined on a set S attains its feasible global minimum at a point $\vec{x}^* \in \mathcal{F} \subseteq S$ if and only if: $f(\vec{x}^*) \leq f(\vec{x}), \forall \vec{x} \in \mathcal{F} \subseteq S$.

- Kuhn and Tucker developed the necessary and sufficient optimality conditions for the CNOP **assuming that the functions f , g_i , and h_j , are differentiable or twice-differentiable.**
- These optimality conditions, commonly known as the *Kuhn-Tucker conditions* (KTC) consist of finding a solution to a system of nonlinear equations.
- However, it is quite difficult that KTC hold for real-world problems. Therefore, the CNOP is an open-problem.

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Two categories

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- Two categories:
 - Direct Methods.
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- Two categories:
 - Direct Methods.
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Direct methods

These methods use only the information of the objective function to find search directions.

These methods require that the objective function is differentiable or twice differentiable so as to use such information to guide the search.

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Despite the large number of mathematical programming methods developed, several optimization problems present characteristics that make them difficult to solve using this kind of algorithms.

Difficulties found

- Problems with non-differentiable objective functions and/or **non-differentiable constraints**.
- Problems with **disjoint feasible regions**
- Problems with objective function **and/or constraints** not available in algebraic form.
- Problems in which the Kuhn-Tucker conditions for optimality do not hold.
- Problems where no mathematical programming technique can guarantee convergence to the global optimum.
- Huge search spaces.

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Nature-inspired algorithms (NIAs)

- Evolutionary algorithms (EAs) and swarm intelligence algorithms (SIAs) (grouped as NIAs) are popular meta-heuristics approaches used to solve complex optimization problems.
- NIAs are designed to deal with unconstrained search spaces.
- The design and addition of a constraint-handling techniques into a NIA to deal with a constrained search space is an open problem.

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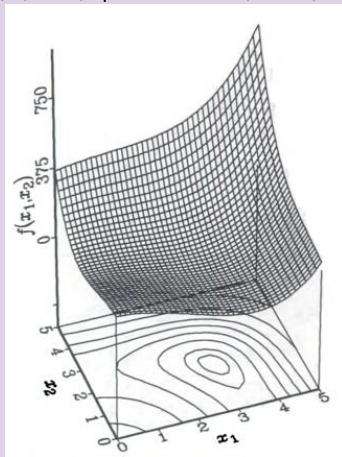
Main components of a nature-inspired algorithm

- 1 Solution encoding.
- 2 Fitness function.
- 3 Initial population.
- 4 Parent selection.
- 5 Variation operators (crossover & mutation).
- 6 Replacement.

Why the search must change?

Unconstrained optimization problem

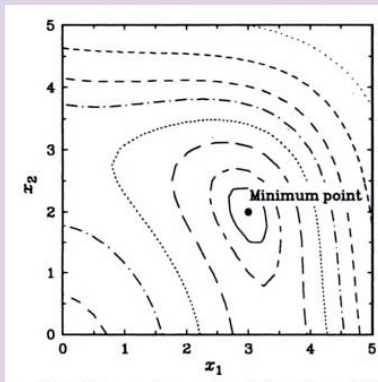
$$\text{Min: } f(\vec{x}) = (x_1^2 + x_2 - 11)^2 + (x_1 + x_2^2)^2$$



Taken from Deb, K., Opt. for Eng. Design, Algorithms and Examples, Prentice-Hall, 1995.

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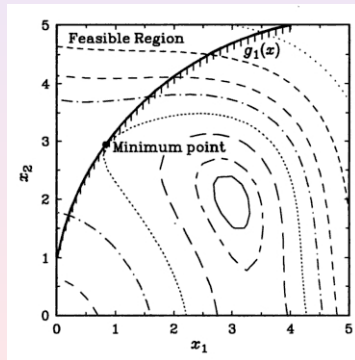
Why the search must change?

Constrained optimization problem

$$\text{Min: } f(\vec{x}) = (x_1^2 + x_2 - 11)^2 + (x_1 + x_2^2)^2$$

subject to:

$$(x_1 - 5)^2 + x_2^2 - 26 \geq 0$$



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Why a constraint-handling technique?

- The initial population (usually generated at random) may contain several (if not all) infeasible solutions, and it may be difficult to generate only feasible solutions from the beginning.
- The information about feasibility must be incorporated into the fitness function to bias the search to the feasible region.
- The parent selection and/or replacement must distinguish between feasible and infeasible solutions.
- The variation operators are blind with respect to the constraints of the optimization problem.

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Constraint-handling over the years

- Two classifications were proposed: one by Michalewicz and Schoenauer [96] and another one by Coello [18].
- Both taxonomies agreed on penalty functions as a particular class.
- This new classification for earlier methods is based on constraint-handling mechanisms, whereas the search algorithm employed is discussed as a separate issue.

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Definition

Based on mathematical programming approaches, where a CNOP is transformed into an unconstrained numerical optimization problem, NIAs have adopted penalty functions, whose general formula is the following:

$$\phi(\vec{x}) = f(\vec{x}) + p(\vec{x})$$

where $\phi(\vec{x})$ is the expanded objective function to be optimized, and $p(\vec{x})$ is the penalty value that can be calculated as follows:

$$p(\vec{x}) = \sum_{i=1}^m r_i \cdot \max(0, g_i(\vec{x}))^2 + \sum_{j=1}^p c_j \cdot |h_j(\vec{x})|$$

where r_i and c_j are positive constants called “penalty factors”.

Pros and cons

- The aim is to decrease the fitness of infeasible solutions.
- Unlike mathematical programming approaches, where interior and exterior penalty functions are employed, NIAs have mainly focused on the last ones.
- Their implementation is quite simple ... but,
- Penalty functions require a careful fine-tuning of their penalty factors.
- Such values usually are highly problem-dependent.
- Different approaches have been proposed to tackle this shortcoming.

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Death penalty

- The most simple penalty function.
- Infeasible solutions are assigned the worst possible fitness value or are simply eliminated from the optimization process.
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- Not suitable for very small feasible region with respect to the whole search space.

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Static penalty functions

- Those whose penalty factor values (r_i and c_j , $i = 1, \dots, m$ and $j = 1 \dots, m$) remain fixed during all the process.
 - Kuri and Villegas-Quezada [59].
 - Homaifar et al. [43]. Hoffmeister and Sprave [42].
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- The main drawback is the generalization of such type of approach, i.e., the values that may be suitable for one problem are normally unsuitable for another one.

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Dynamic penalty functions

- Time (usually the generation counter in a NIA) is used to affect the penalty factors.
- Considering the usage of exterior penalty functions, soft penalties are expected first, while severe penalties are adopted in the last part of the search.
- Examples:
 - Joines and Houck [48].
 - Kazarlis and Petridis[51].
 - Crossley and Williams [21].
- The cooling factor of the simulated annealing algorithm has been employed to vary the penalty factors by Michalewicz and Attia [94].
- The main disadvantages of dynamic penalty functions are the parameters for their dynamic tuning and the difficulty to generalize them.

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Adaptive penalty functions

- The behavior of the NIA is used to update the penalty factors.
- Feasibility of the best solution in a number of generations by Hadj-Alouane and Bean [34].
- The fitness of the best feasible solution by Rasheed [105].
- The balance between feasible and infeasible solutions by Hamda and Schoenauer [35] and Hamida and Schoenauer [36].
- The average of the objective function and the level of violation of each constraint by Barbosa and Lemonge [11].
- Co-evolution by Coello [20].
- Fuzzy logic by Wu and Yu [150].
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- Not clear which approach was more competitive.
- Most of the time, additional parameters were required.

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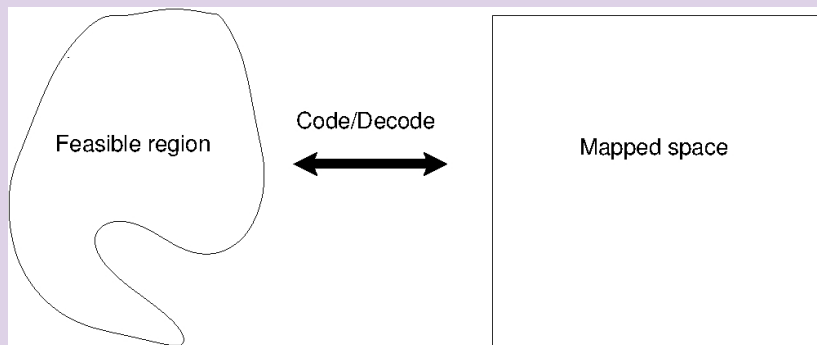
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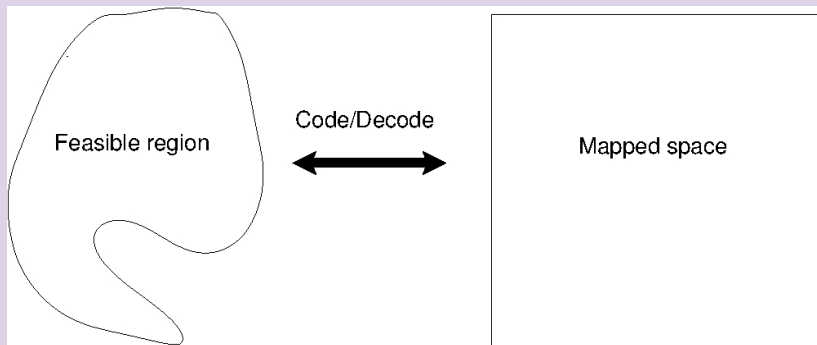
Decoders

- One of the most competitive constraint-handling techniques in the early years.
- They are based on the idea of mapping the feasible region \mathcal{F} of the search space \mathcal{S} onto an easier-to-sample space where a NIA can provide a better performance [56].



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- The mapping process must guarantee that each feasible solution in the search space is included in the decoded space and that a decoded solution corresponds to a feasible solution in the search space.
- The transformation process must be fast and it is highly desirable that small changes in the search space of the original problem cause small changes in the decoded space as well.
 - Homomorphous maps: the feasible region is mapped into an n -dimensional cube, by Koziel and Michalewicz [56, 57].
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Special operators

- A special operator is conceived as a way of either preserving the feasibility of a solution or moving within a specific region of interest within the search space.
- A variation operator which constructs linear combinations of feasible solutions to preserve their feasibility (GENOCOP) by Michalewicz [93].
- Special operators designed to convert solutions which only satisfy linear constraints into fully feasible solutions (GENOCOP III) by Michalewicz and Nazhiyath [95].
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Separation of objective function and constraints

- Unlike combining the objective function and the values of the constraints into a single value (i.e. penalty function), there are constraint-handling techniques which work with the opposite idea.

Separation of objective function and constraints

- Powell and Skolnick in [103] proposed an approach based on the following Equation.

$$\text{fitness}(\vec{x}) = \begin{cases} f(\vec{x}) & \text{if feasible} \\ 1 + r \left(\sum_{i=1}^m g_i(\vec{x}) + \sum_{j=1}^p h_j(\vec{x}) \right) & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

where a feasible solution has always a better fitness value with respect to that of an infeasible solution, whose fitness is based only on their accumulated constraint violation.

Separation of objective function and constraints

- Hinterding and Michalewicz in [41] proposed the idea of dividing the search in two phases: (1) finding feasible solutions, regardless of the objective function value, and (2) after a suitable number of feasible solutions has been found, optimizing the objective function.
- Such idea was revisited by Venkatraman and Yen [138].
- Schoenauer and Xanthakis in [118] proposed a lexicographic ordering (behavioral memory) to satisfy constraints, i.e., when a certain number of solutions in the population satisfy the first constraint, an attempt to satisfy the second one is made (but the first constraint must continue to be satisfied), and so on.

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Separation of objective function and constraints

- Deb [25] proposed a set of three feasibility criteria as follows:
 - 1 When comparing two feasible solutions, the one with the best objective function is chosen.
 - 2 When comparing a feasible and an infeasible solution, the feasible one is chosen.
 - 3 When comparing two infeasible solutions, the one with the lowest sum of constraint violation is chosen.

The sum of constraint violation can be calculated as follows:

$$\phi(\vec{x}) = \sum_{i=1}^m \max(0, g_i(\vec{x}))^2 + \sum_{j=1}^p |h_j(\vec{x})|$$

Separation of objective function and constraints

- Different multi-population schemes have been proposed.
- Coello [19] divided a GA-population into sub-populations and each sub-population tried to satisfy one constraint of a CNOP and another one optimized the objective function.
- Liang and Suganthan proposed a dynamic assignment of sub-swarms to constraints in PSO [67].
- The approach was further improved in [68], where only two sub-swarms, one of them with a tolerance for inequality constraints, were used. Each particle, and not a sub-swarm, was dynamically assigned the objective function or the constraint, in such a way that more difficult objectives to optimize (satisfy) were assigned more frequently.
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Separation of objective function and constraints

- Liu et al. [69] proposed a separation scheme based on a co-evolutionary approach in which two populations are adopted. The first one optimized the objective function without considering the constraints, while the second population aimed to satisfy the constraints of the problem. Each population could migrate solutions to the other.

Separation of objective function and constraints

- Multi-objective optimization concepts (Pareto dominance and Pareto ranking) have been quite popular to solve constrained optimization problems [84]. Two groups can be identified:
 - 1 CNOP as a bi-objective problem (the original objective function and the sum of constraint violation).
 - 2 CNOP as a multi-objective optimization problem (the original objective function and each constraint are handled as objectives).

Separation of objective function and constraints

- The main shortcomings are related to the lack of bias provided by Pareto ranking when used in a straightforward manner [115], and the difficulties of these approaches to preserve diversity in the population [84].
- Additional mechanisms have been adopted such as Pareto ranking in different search spaces [106, 107, 1, 4], the shrinking of the search space [40] and the use of non-dominated sorting and clustering techniques to generate collaboration among sub-populations [108].

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 - Need of a careful fine-tuning of parameters.
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Studies on other topics

- Parameter control mechanisms in DE-based constrained numerical optimization by Palomeque and Mezura-Montes (DE self-adaptive parameters, including diversity parameters) [89] and by Zielinski et al. (DE adaptive parameters) [162].
- Zielinski and Laur [160] explored different termination conditions (e.g., improvement-based criteria, movement-based criteria, distribution-based criteria) for DE in constrained optimization.
- Zielinski and Laur [161] studied the effect of the tolerance utilized in the equality constraints, where values between $\epsilon = 1 \times 10^{-7}$ and $\epsilon = 1 \times 10^{-15}$ allowed the algorithm, coupled with the feasibility rules, to reach competitive results.
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Multi-operator mechanisms

- The use of feasibility rules has favored the development of approaches with self-adaptive variation operator selection mechanisms on DE:
- jDE-2 by Brest [14], where different variants are combined with an injection of solutions generated at random
- SaDE by Huang et al. [46], where, besides the combination of DE variants, SQP is adopted as a local search operator.
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Combination with special operators

- Barkat Ullah [135] designed a mechanism to force infeasible individuals to move to the feasible region through the application of search space reduction and diversity checking mechanisms designed to avoid premature convergence.
- Mezura-Montes and Cetina-Domínguez [82] proposed a special operator designed to locate infeasible solutions close to the best feasible solution.
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- Cruz et al. [22] and Aragón et al. [6], based on the clonal selection principle used the feasibility rules to rank antibodies based on affinity.
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- Ma and Simon [76] proposed an improved version of the biogeography-based optimization (BBO) algorithm (inspired on the study of distributions of species over time and space) with the feasibility rules as criteria to choose solutions with the so-called “habitat suitability index”.
- Liu et al. [72] proposed the organizational evolutionary algorithm (OEA). A static penalty function and the feasibility rules were compared as constraint-handling techniques.
- Mezura-Montes and Hernández-Ocaña [88] used the feasibility rules with the Bacterial Foraging Optimization Algorithm (BFOA) in the greedy selection mechanism within the chemotactic loop.
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- Wang et al. [142] implicitly used feasibility rules to rank the particles in a hybrid multi-swarm PSO (HMPSO) where the DE mutation operator was also adopted.
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- Ali and Kajee-Bagdadi [2] presented a DE-based approach with a modified version of the pattern search method as a local search operator.
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Empirical studies

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The early years

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- Special operators
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Current constraint-handling techniques

- Feasibility rules
- **Stochastic ranking**
- ε -constrained method
- Novel penalty functions
- Novel special operators
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Summary and current trends

- A bird's eye view
- Current trends

Stochastic ranking (SR)

- Proposed by Runarsson and Yao [114] to deal with the shortcomings of a penalty function (over and under penalization).
- A user-defined parameter called P_f controls the criterion used for comparison of infeasible solutions:
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Stochastic ranking (SR)

```
Begin
  For i=1 to N
    For j=1 to P-1
      u=random(0,1)
      If ( $\phi(l_j) = \phi(l_{j+1}) = 0$ ) or ( $u < P_f$ )
        If ( $f(l_j) > f(l_{j+1})$ )
          swap( $l_j, l_{j+1}$ )
        Else
          If ( $\phi(l_j) > \phi(l_{j+1})$ )
            swap( $l_j, l_{j+1}$ )
        End For
      If (not swap performed)
        break
    End For
  End
```

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Adapted to DE

- Despite being a ranking process, SR has been adopted by NIAs which do not rank solutions, such as DE.
- Zhang et al. [156] used SR in a DE variant based on [90]. P_f was defined by a dynamic parameter control mechanism (high value at the beginning, low value at the end).
- Liu et al. [73, 71] also used SR in DE and proposed the concept of directional information related to the choice of the most convenient search direction based on the DE mutation operator.
- Fan et al. [30] ranked vectors with SR before the DE operators are applied. The population is split into two sets: (1) the vectors with the highest ranks, and (2) the remaining vectors. The base vector and the vector which determines the search direction are chosen at random from the first set. The other vector is chosen at random from the second set.

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- Runarsson and Yao [115] improved their ES by adding a differential mutation similar to that used in DE. The authors concluded that a good constraint-handling mechanism needs to be coupled to an appropriate search engine.
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- Two main components:
 - A relaxation of the limit to consider a solution as feasible.
 - A lexicographical ordering mechanism in which the minimization of the sum of constraint violation precedes the objective function.
- The value $\varepsilon > 0$, determines the so-called ε -level comparisons between a pair of solutions \vec{x}_1 and \vec{x}_2 with objective function values $f(\vec{x}_1)$ and $f(\vec{x}_2)$ and sums of constraint violation $\phi(\vec{x}_1)$ and $\phi(\vec{x}_2)$.

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- If both solutions in the pairwise comparison are feasible, slightly infeasible (as determined by the ε value) or even if they have the same sum of constraint violation, they are compared using their objective function values.
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- If $\varepsilon = \infty$, the ε -level comparison works by using only the objective function values as the comparison criteria.
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- Takahama and Sakai used a similar approach called α -constrained method into a GA [123]. Even mathematical programming methods have been used with this approach (Nealder-Mead) [124].
- Wang and Li also adopted the α -constrained method in [140], using DE as their search engine
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Improvements

- The ε value is fine-tuned by Takahama and Sakai with dynamic [124], and adaptive parameter control mechanisms [127].
- Zeng et al. [155] also proposed a dynamic decreasing mechanism inspired in [36].
- A gradient-based mutation was added to the DE-based approach by the same authors in [126] and by Zhang et al. in an EA in [157].
- In [128], Takahama and Sakai improved their approach by adding a decreasing probability on the use of the gradient-based mutation. They also introduced two new mechanisms to deal with boundary constraints (reflecting back and assigning the limit value).
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NIAs turning to the ε -constrained method

- ε -jDE by Brest et al. [12], where different DE variants, parameter self-adaptation (including ε), and population reduction were employed.
- An improved version called jDEsoco was proposed by Brest et al. in [13], where an ageing mechanism to replace those solutions stagnated in a local optimum was added. Moreover, only the 60% of the population was compared by the ε -constrained method and the remaining 40% was compared by only using the objective function value.
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Adaptive penalty functions

- Farmani and Wright [31] proposed a two-part adaptive penalty function. The first part increases the fitness of the infeasible solutions with a better value of the objective function with respect to the best solution in the current population. The second part modifies the fitness values of the worst infeasible solutions.
- Tessema and Yen [133] used the number of feasible solutions in the current population to determine penalization values so as to favor slightly infeasible solutions having a good objective function value.

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Adaptive penalty functions

- Mani and Patvardhan [79] proposed a two-population GA-like-based approach. One population evolves by using an adaptive penalty function. The other population evolves based on feasibility rules. Both populations exchange solutions.
- He et al. [39] used two PSO algorithms, one to co-evolve penalty factors and the other one to evolve solutions to the optimization problem.
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- Tasgetiren and Suganthan [132] used of a dynamic penalty function coupled with a multi-population DE algorithm where each populations evolved independently.
- Puzzi and Carpinteri [104] explored a dynamic penalty function based on multiplications instead of summations in a GA-based approach.

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Static penalty functions

- Deb and Datta [26] obtained suitable penalty factors as follows:
- A bi-objective problem (original objective function and sum of constraint violation ϕ , restricted by a tolerance value) was solved by a MOEA
- A cubic curve to approximate the current obtained Pareto front was generated by using four points whose ϕ values were below a small tolerance.
- The penalty factor was then defined by calculating the corresponding slope at $\phi = 0$.
- After that, a traditional static penalty function was used to solve the original CNOP by using a local search algorithm (Matlab's **fmincon()** procedure was used by the authors) using the solution with the lowest ϕ value from the population of the MOEA as the starting point for the search.

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- In [23], Datta and Deb extended their approach to deal with equality constraints.
- Two main changes:
 - The punishment provided by the penalty value obtained by the bi-objective problem was increased if the local search failed to generate a feasible solution.
 - The small tolerance used for choosing the four points employed to approximate the cubic curve was relaxed.

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Novel special operators

- The recent proposals based on the use of special operators that have been revised here emphasize the current focus on generating proposals which are easier to generalize.
- Leguizamón and Coello Coello [62] proposed a boundary operator based on conducting a binary search between a feasible and an infeasible solution. Furthermore, the authors designed a strategy to select which constraint (if more than one is present in a CNOP) is analyzed.
- The search algorithm was an ACO variant for continuous search spaces.
- The approach needed an additional constraint-handling technique (a penalty function was used in this case)

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- Huang et al. [45] proposed a boundary operator in a two-population approach.
- The first population evolves by using DE as the search engine, based only on the objective function value (regardless of feasibility).
- The second population stores only feasible solutions and the boundary operator uses solutions from both populations to generate new solutions, through the application of the bisection method in the boundaries of the feasible region.
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Constraint satisfaction

- Wanner et al. [149] proposed the Constraint Quadratic Approximation (CQA), which is a special operator designed to restrict an evolutionary algorithm (a GA in this case) to sample solutions inside an object with the same dimensions of the feasible region of the search space.
- This is achieved by a second-order approximation of the objective function and one equality constraint.
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- Peconick et al. [102] proposed the Constraint Quadratic Approximation for Multiple Equality Constraints (CQA-MEC).
- An iterative projection algorithm was able to find points satisfying the approximated quadratic constraints with a low computational overhead.
- It still requires the static penalty function to work.
- Araujo et al. [8] extended the previous approaches to deal with multiple inequality constraints by using a special operator in which the locally convex inequality constraints are approximated by quadratic functions, while the locally non-convex inequality constraints are approximated by linear functions.
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- It is applied to some individuals in the population as follows: the satisfaction of a randomly chosen equality constraint is verified for a given solution. If it is not satisfied, a decision variable, also chosen at random, is updated with the aim to satisfy it. If the constraint is indeed satisfied, two other variables are modified in such a way that the constraint is still satisfied (i.e., the constraint is sampled).
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Feasible directions

- Spadoni and Stefanini [121] transformed a CNOP into an unconstrained search problem by sampling feasible directions instead of solutions of a CNOP.
- Three special operators, related to feasible directions for box constraints, linear inequality constraints, and quadratic inequality constraints, are utilized to generate new solutions by using DE as the search algorithm.
- The main contribution of the approach is that it transforms a CNOP into an unconstrained search problem without using a penalty function. However, it cannot deal with nonlinear (either equality or inequality) constraints.

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General operators made special

- Lu and Chen [75] proposed an approach called self-adaptive velocity particle swarm optimization (SAVPSO).
- Three elements:
 - The position of the feasible region with respect to the whole search space.
 - The connectivity and the shape of the feasible region.
 - The ratio of the feasible region with respect to the search space.
- The velocity formula was modified in such a way that each particle has the ability to self-adjust its velocity according to the aforementioned features of the feasible region.

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Bi-objective problem

- Ray et al. [109] proposed the Infeasibility Driven Evolutionary Algorithm (IDEA).
- The second objective is the constraint violation measure, (zero value for feasible solutions and a sum of ranking values based on the violation per constraint).
- The union of parents and offspring is split in two sets, one with the feasible solutions and the other with the infeasible ones.
- Non-dominated sorting ranks both sets separately and, based on the proportion of desired feasible solutions, they are chosen first from the infeasible set and later on, the best ranked feasible solutions are chosen.
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- The second objective is the constraint violation measure, (zero value for feasible solutions and a sum of ranking values based on the violation per constraint).
- The union of parents and offspring is split in two sets, one with the feasible solutions and the other with the infeasible ones.
- Non-dominated sorting ranks both sets separately and, based on the proportion of desired feasible solutions, they are chosen first from the infeasible set and later on, the best ranked feasible solutions are chosen.
- SQP was added to IDEA in the Infeasibility Empowered Memetic Algorithm (IMEA) [120].

Bi-objective problem

- Wang et al. [147], in their adaptive trade-off model (ATM) divided the search in three phases based on the feasibility of solutions in the population:
 - Only infeasible solutions (Pareto dominance)
 - Feasible and infeasible solutions (fitness value based on feasible solutions ratio).
 - Only feasible solutions (objective function).
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- Wang et al. [145] added a shrinking mechanism to ATM in the Accelerated ATM (AATM).
- The ATM was coupled with DE in a recent approach [143], showing an improvement in the results.
- Liu et al. [72] used the ATM in an EA but with two main differences:
 - Good point set crossover was used to generate offspring.
 - Feasibility rules were the criteria to select solutions in the second stage of the ATM.

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- Li et al. [64] used a PSO algorithm in which Pareto dominance was used as a criterion in the pbest update process and in the selection of the local-best leaders in a neighborhood. The sum of constraint violation worked as a tie-breaker.
- Venter and Haftka [139] also adopted PSO as their search algorithm. However, the leader selection was based most of the time on the sum of constraint violation, while the rest of the time the criterion was one of the three following choices:
 - The original objective function.
 - The crowding distance.
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- Wang et al. [141] used a hybrid selection mechanism based on Pareto dominance and tournament selection into a Adaptive Bacterial Foraging Algorithm (ABFA).
- Wang et al. [144] proposed the use of Pareto dominance in a Hybrid Constrained EA (HCOEA). A global search carried out by an EA is coupled to a local search operator based on SPX.
- Wang et al. [148] proposed a steady state EA by applying orthogonal crossover to a randomly chosen set of solutions in the current population. After that, the non-dominated solutions obtained from the set of offspring are chosen. Alternative, solutions can also be chosen if they have a lower sum of constraint violation.

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Three-objective problem

- Reynoso-Meza et al. [111] proposed the spherical-pruning multi-objective optimization differential evolution (sp-MODE).
- The second objective was the sum of constraint violation for inequality constraints and the third objective was the sum of constraint violation for equality constraints.
- An external archive was used to store non-dominated solutions.
- The sphere-pruning operator aims to find the best trade-off between feasibility and the optimization of the objective function.

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 - The original objective.
 - The constraint-violation (decreasing).
 - A niche count (decreasing).
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The early years

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- Decoders
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Current constraint-handling techniques

- Feasibility rules
- Stochastic ranking
- ε -constrained method
- Novel penalty functions
- Novel special operators
- Multi-objective concepts
- **Ensemble of constraint-handling techniques**

4

Summary and current trends

- A bird's eye view
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Ensemble of constraint-handling techniques

- Mallipeddi and Suganthan [78] proposed an ensemble of four constraint techniques (ECHT):
 - Feasibility rules.
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 - A self-adaptive penalty function.
 - The ε -constrained method.
- A four sub-population scheme was considered.
- One EP-based and one DE-based versions were designed.
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- Elsayed et al. [29] proposed a DE-based algorithm where the combination of four DE-mutations, two DE recombinations and two constraint-handling techniques (feasibility rules and ε -constrained method) generated sixteen variants which were assigned to each individual in a single-population algorithm.
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Ensemble of constraint-handling techniques

- A similar idea was presented in a combination of two DE variants and a variable neighborhood search with three constraint-handling techniques (feasibility rules, ε -constrained method, and an adaptive penalty function) by Tasgetiren et al. [131].

Ensemble of constraint-handling techniques

- The ECHT opens a new paradigm in constraint-handling techniques.
- The design of mechanisms which allow the combination of approaches that can be seen as complementary (in terms of the way in which they operate).
- However, as the combination of several techniques considerably enhances the capabilities of an approach, it is also required to define parameter values for each of these techniques.
- Parameter control [74] becomes an important issue when designing ensemble approaches.

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A bird's eye view

Technique	Core concept	Pros	Cons
FR	Three criteria for pairwise selection	Simple to add into a NIA No extra parameters	May cause premature convergence
SR	Ranking process	Easy to implement	Not all NIAs have ordering in their processes One extra parameter
ϵ -CM	Transforms a constrained problem into an unconstrained problem	Very competitive performance	Extra parameters Local search for high performance
NPF	Focus on adaptive and dynamic approaches	Well-known transformation process	Some of them add extra parameters
NSO	Focus on boundary operators and equality constraints	Tendency to design easy to generalize operators	Still limited usage
MOC	Focused on bi-objective transformation of a CNOP Pareto dominance	Both, Pareto ranking and dominance still popular	May require an additional constraint-handling technique
ECHT	Combination of two or more constraint-handling techniques	Very competitive performance	Requires the definition of several parameter values

How important is the search algorithm?

- DE is the most preferred algorithm, usually coupled with the feasibility rules.
- GAs are popular when coupled with penalty functions.
- PSO has been mainly coupled with the feasibility rules as well.
- ES has been usually coupled with the stochastic ranking.
- EP, ACO scarcely used.
- Among novel algorithms, ABC with feasibility rules has been particularly popular.
- AIS recently coupled with the feasibility rules.
- Gradient-based local search frequently found.
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Benchmarks

The first one

Function	n	Type of function	ρ	LI	NI	LE	NE	a
g01	13	quadratic	0.0003%	9	0	0	0	6
g02	20	nonlinear	99.9973%	2	0	0	0	1
g03	10	nonlinear	0.0026%	0	0	0	1	1
g04	5	quadratic	27.0079%	4	2	0	0	2
g05	4	nonlinear	0.0000%	2	0	0	3	3
g06	2	nonlinear	0.0057%	0	2	0	0	2
g07	10	quadratic	0.0000%	3	5	0	0	6
g08	2	nonlinear	0.8581%	0	2	0	0	0
g09	7	nonlinear	0.5199%	0	4	0	0	2
g10	8	linear	0.0020%	6	0	0	0	6
g11	2	quadratic	0.0973%	0	0	0	1	1
g12	3	quadratic	4.7697%	0	1	0	0	0
g13	5	nonlinear	0.0000%	0	0	1	2	3
g14	10	nonlinear	0.0000%	0	0	3	0	3
g15	3	quadratic	0.0000%	0	0	1	1	2
g16	5	nonlinear	0.0204%	4	34	0	0	4
g17	6	nonlinear	0.0000%	0	0	0	4	4
g18	9	quadratic	0.0000%	0	13	0	0	6
g19	15	nonlinear	33.4761%	0	5	0	0	0
g20	24	linear	0.0000%	0	6	2	12	16
g21	7	linear	0.0000%	0	1	0	5	6
g22	22	linear	0.0000%	0	1	8	11	19
g23	9	linear	0.0000%	0	2	3	1	6
g24	2	linear	79.6556%	0	2	0	0	2

The second one

Problem/Search Range	Type of Objective	Number of Constraints		Feasibility Region (ρ)	
		E	I	10D	30D
C01 [0,10] ^D	Non Separable	0	2 Non Separable	0.997689	1.000000
C02 [-5,12,5,12] ^D	Separable	1 Separable	2 Separable	0.000000	0.000000
C03 [-1000,1000] ^D	Non Separable	1 Non Separable	0	0.000000	0.000000
C04 [-50,50] ^D	Separable	4 2 Non Separable, 2 Separable	0	0.000000	0.000000
C05 [-600,600] ^D	Separable	2 Separable	0	0.000000	0.000000
C06 [-600,600] ^D	Separable	2 Rotated	0	0.000000	0.000000

The second one

C07 [-140,140] ^D	Non Separable	0	1 Separable	0.505123	0.503725
C08 [-140,140] ^D	Non Separable	0	1 Rotated	0.379512	0.375278
C09 [-500,500] ^D	Non Separable	1 Separable	0	0.000000	0.000000
C10 [-500,500] ^D	Non Separable	1 Rotated	0	0.000000	0.000000
C11 [-100,100] ^D	Rotated	1 Non Separable	0	0.000000	0.000000
C12 [-1000,1000] ^D	Separable	1 Non Separable	1 Separable	0.000000	0.000000
C13 [-500,500] ^D	Separable	0	3 2 Separable, 1 Non Separable	0.000000	0.000000
C14 [-1000,1000] ^D	Non Separable	0	3 Separable	0.003112	0.006123
C15 [-1000,1000] ^D	Non Separable	0	3 Rotated	0.003210	0.006023
C16 [-10,10] ^D	Non Separable	2 Separable	2 1 Separable, 1 Non Separable	0.000000	0.000000
C17 [-10,10] ^D	Non Separable	1 Separable	2 Non Separable	0.000000	0.000000
C18 [-50,50] ^D	Non Separable	1 Separable	1 Separable	0.000010	0.000000

The most recent

Problem/Search Range	Type of Objective	Number of Constraints	
		E	f
C01 [-100,100] ^D	Non Separable	0	1 Separable
C02 [-100,100] ^D	Non Separable, Rotated	0	1 Non Separable, Rotated
C03 [-100,100] ^D	Non Separable	1 Separable	1 Separable
C04 [-10,10] ^D	Separable	0	2 Separable
C05 [-10,10] ^D	Non Separable	0	2 Non Separable, Rotated
C06 [-20,20] ^D	Separable	6	0 Separable
C07 [-50,50] ^D	Separable	2 Separable	0
C08 [-100,100] ^D	Separable	2 Non Separable	0
C09 [-10,10] ^D	Separable	2 Non Separable	0
C10 [-100,100] ^D	Separable	2 Non Separable	0
C11 [-100,100] ^D	Separable	1 Non Separable	1 Non Separable
C12 [-100,100] ^D	Separable	0	2 Separable
C13 [-100,100] ^D	Non Separable	0	3 Separable
C14 [-100,100] ^D	Non Separable	1 Separable	1 Separable
C15 [-100,100] ^D	Separable	1	1
C16 [-100,100] ^D	Separable	1 Non Separable	1 Separable
C17 [-100,100] ^D	Non Separable	1 Non Separable	1 Separable
C18	Separable	1	2

The most recent

$[-100,100]^D$			Non Separable
C19 $[-50,50]^D$	Separable	0	2 Non Separable
C20 $[-100,100]^D$	Non Separable	0	2
C21 $[-100,100]^D$	Rotated	0	2 Rotated
C22 $[-100,100]^D$	Rotated	0	3 Rotated
C23 $[-100,100]^D$	Rotated	1 Rotated	1 Rotated
C24 $[-100,100]^D$	Rotated	1 Rotated	1 Rotated
C25 $[-100,100]^D$	Rotated	1 Rotated	1 Rotated
C26 $[-100,100]^D$	Rotated	1 Rotated	1 Rotated
C27 $[-100,100]^D$	Rotated	1 Rotated	2 Rotated
C28 $[-50,50]^D$	Rotated	0	2 Rotated

- Evals (number of solution evaluations to find a feasible solution).
- Progress ratio (difference between the objective function value of the first and best feasible solutions found).
- AFES (average number of solution evaluations in a set of successful runs).
- FP (percentage of feasible runs).
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- SP (successful performance computed by AFES divided by P).

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- Progress ratio (difference between the objective function value of the first and best feasible solutions found).
- AFES (average number of solution evaluations in a set of successful runs).
- FP (percentage of feasible runs).
- P (percentage of successful runs).
- SP (successful performance computed by AFES divided by P).

1

Introduction

- The problem of interest
- Some important concepts
- Mathematical-programming methods
- Why alternative methods?

2

The early years

- Penalty functions
- Decoders
- Special operators
- Separation of objective function and constraints
- General comments

3

Current constraint-handling techniques

- Feasibility rules
- Stochastic ranking
- ε -constrained method
- Novel penalty functions
- Novel special operators
- Multi-objective concepts
- Ensemble of constraint-handling techniques

4

Summary and current trends

- A bird's eye view
- Current trends

Constraint-handling for EMO

- EMO approaches usually adopt constraint-handling techniques for single-objective optimization.
- Topics of interest:
 - Performance measures.
 - Diversity mechanisms.
 - Boundary operators.
 - Many-objective multi-constrained optimization.

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Constraint approximation

- Fitness approximation methods have been extensively applied to unconstrained optimization problems.
- Jin [47] proposed to enlarge the feasible region by using surrogates to ease the generation of feasible solutions.
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Dynamic constraints

- Nguyen and Yao [99] started the research on DCOPs, by providing a benchmark and an initial comparison of algorithms based mainly on hypermutation and repair methods.

Benchmark

Table 1: Main features of the test problems (Nguyen and Yao, 2012).

Problem	Obj. Function	Constraints	DFR	SwO	bNAO	OICB	OISB	Path
g24_u	Dynamic	No Constraints	1	No	No	No	Yes	N/A
g24_l	Dynamic	Static	2	Yes	No	Yes	No	N/A
g24_f	Static	Static	2	No	No	Yes	No	N/A
g24_uf	Static	No Constraints	1	No	No	No	Yes	N/A
g24_2*	Dynamic	Static	2	Yes	No	Yes and No	Yes and No	N/A
g24_2u	Dynamic	No Constraints	1	No	No	No	Yes	N/A
g24_3	Static	Dynamic	2-3	No	Yes	Yes	No	N/A
g24_3b	Dynamic	Dynamic	2-3	Yes	No	Yes	No	N/A
g24_3f	Static	Static	1	No	No	Yes	No	N/A
g24_4	Dynamic	Dynamic	2-3	Yes	No	Yes	No	N/A
g24_5*	Dynamic	Dynamic	2-3	Yes	No	Yes and No	Yes and No	N/A
g24_6a	Dynamic	Static	2	Yes	No	No	Yes	Hard
g24_6b	Dynamic	Static	1	No	No	No	Yes	N/A
g24_6c	Dynamic	Static	2	Yes	No	No	Yes	Easy
g24_6d	Dynamic	Static	2	Yes	No	No	Yes	Hard
g24_7	Static	Dynamic	2	No	No	Yes	No	N/A
g24_8a	Dynamic	No Constraints	1	No	No	No	No	N/A
g24_8b	Dynamic	Static	2	Yes	No	Yes	No	N/A
DFR	Number of disconnected feasible regions							
SwO	Switched global optimum between disconnected regions							
bNAO	Better newly appear optimum without changing existing ones							
OICB	Global optimum is in the constraint boundary							
OISB	Global optimum is in the search boundary							
Path	Indicate if it is easy or difficult to use mutation to travel between feasible regions							
Dynamic	The function is dynamic							
Static	There is no change							
*	In some change periods, the landscape either is a plateau or contains infinite number of optima and all optima (including the existing optimum) lie in a line parallel to one of the axes							

Dynamic constraints

- Pal et al. [101] proposed one of the first competitive algorithms for DCOPs based on the gravitational search algorithm and a repair method.
- Ameca-Alducin et al. [3] proposed a DE-based approach with a repair mechanism based on sampling to solve DCOPs. Immigrants and change of DE variants were used as well.

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Dynamic constraints

- Sharma & Sharma [119] used special operators and Tabu search concepts to deal with DCOPs.
- Aragón et al. [5] proposed a T-cell-inspired approach to solve DCOPs where four sub-populations with different goals interacted in the dynamic search space.
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Ensembles/multi-operator NIAs

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Theory

- There is some work on runtime analysis in constrained search spaces with EAs [158] and also in the usefulness of infeasible solutions in the search process [153].
- Other theoretical studies have focused on some ES variants, such as the $(1+1)$ -ES [10] and more recently the $(1,\lambda)$ -ES [9].
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