Journal of Global Research in Electronics and Communication
Volume 1, No. 12, December 2025
Available Online at: www.jgrec.info
RESEARCH PAPER

Automation in Smart Factories: Trends in Robotics, IoT, and Cyber-Physical Systems in Manufacturing

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***Abstract*—The use of Industry 4.0 technologies is reshaping conventional production, and automation in smart factories is a major contributor to this transformation. Automation enables decision-making and production systems that are up to the point thanks to the integration of Robotics, the Internet of Things (IoT), and Cyber-Physical Systems (CPS). The paper under review is dedicated to identifying the present-day trends and breakthroughs in industrial automation that relate, for instance, to introducing autonomous mobile robots, robotic process automation (RPA), digital twins, and edge-cloud computing, among others. Besides, it tackles given the fact that IoT and IIoT are the techs that make seamless connectivity and communication between the digital and physical systems possible. Moreover, the paper mentions the big issues, data privacy, interoperability, and protocol standardization, which have been around for some time. The current study not only gathers but also discusses the recent research and technological advancements, thus, providing a glimpse into the future of smart manufacturing and the technification of interlinked, intelligent industrial ecosystems.**

Keywords—Automation, Smart Factories, Industry 4.0, Robotics, IoT, Cyber-Physical Systems (CPS), IIoT, Edge Computing, Intelligent Manufacturing.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Internet of Things (IoT) gained a lot of traction in the late 90s after an investigation by MIT's Auto-ID Labs expanded the publication market for the concept, which had initially been proposed in the early 90s. Connected digital devices, services, and infrastructures form what is known as the Internet of Things (IoT). Life has been made easier thanks to the use of IoT-based technologies in several real-world applications [1]. Among the many uses for the Internet of Things are "smart" healthcare, "smart" farms, "smart" security systems, "smart" manufacturing facilities, and "smart" industries. By incorporating IoT technology into the industrial sphere, the smart industry has started a very constructive initiative. As projected, advanced technologies and industry might tackle a wide range of challenges by applying pervasive security countermeasures via effective IoT implementation.

The goal of robot-assisted human-robot collaboration in Industry 4.0's automated manufacturing processes is mass customization and production. We talk about the several human-robot collaboration tactics and how they work in different production systems [2]. Organisations may reap future benefits from the use of robots in business automation, which aims to reduce management expenses by streamlining processes and increasing productivity. Business process management allows you to automate tasks. The use of industrial automation in the textile industry and smart automated inspection devices [3]. Additionally, in the absence of substantial demand data, profitability is assessed under uncertain demand scenarios. For the purpose of optimising the unified profit function, we present an algorithm (KDPMG) in this research.

Robotics encompasses a wide range of fields that are all interested in robots and how they work. In his 1921 drama "Rossum's Universal Robots (RUR)," a Czech author initially coined the term robot, which is derived from the Czech word "robota," meaning "forced labour." [4]. Robots were seen as futuristic machines due to their association with science fiction. Scientists and engineers have worked hard to make these machines a reality thanks to technological developments in sectors such as electronics, mechanical, computer, and information technology. A major breakthrough was announced with the emergence of feedback control systems and self-correcting mechanisms.

Industry 4.0 can be advanced through the use of the smart factory idea, which incorporates information systems, embedded technology, automation, and robots. Digital manufacturing and digital twin models are made possible by a number of new technologies, including sophisticated artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), cyber-physical systems (CPS), cloud computing, big data, and classical (traditional) manufacturing. By combining computing, networking, and real estate, cyber-physical systems (CPSs) aim to bridge the gap between the digital and physical realms through the establishment of a communication interface [5][6]. Hardware (e.g., sensors, actuators, robots) and cyber software (e.g., communication, networking, and the internet) are widely recognized as representing the link between the physical and virtual worlds, but different people may have different understandings of what a CPS is. Industry 4.0 revolves around CPS.

A. Structured of the Paper

This paper is structured to cover key aspects of automation in smart factories. Section II explores automation and robotics in smart manufacturing. Section IV examines internet of things (IoT) manufacturing. Section IV explains cyber-physical system (CPS) in manufacturing. Section V provides a literature review of recent technologies and trends, and Section VI concludes with insights and future directions for smart manufacturing.

II. AUTOMATION AND ROBOTICS IN SMART MANUFACTURING

The automation of the entire production process. The intermediate phase emphasizes mainly the reinforcement of real-time data gathering and managing, through sensor networks and the IioT [7]. In the end, human-like intelligent (AI) predictive analytics and autonomous decision-making are used to tune processes and increase output to the fullest. Up-to-date research has underlined the combined use of IoT, IIoT, and Industry 4.0 as the key driver for smart manufacturing technology.

A. Autonomous Systems

The automation systems that address this type of issue were developed using state-space and dynamic programming as their foundational principles. These ideas have found widespread application in engineering, especially in the aerospace industry. The development of sensor, computer, intelligent, communication, and control technologies were all part of the larger effort to address issues with system automation through the information and communication technology (ICT) sector [8]. In order to strengthen people's and systems' capacity to do tasks autonomously, there was a growing need to cultivate autonomy. This would reduce reliance on human-related interactions. The software automation system's development cycle.

B. Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning

The scientific community actively develops and discusses studies in the area of artificial intelligence (AI). Theoretical considerations of AI technology and their potential societal applications are the focus of this research. Machine learning (ML) is a set of techniques used in artificial intelligence (AI) that can predict data qualities based on known properties found in training data. A subfield of machine learning is known as deep learning (DL) [9]. Studies pertaining to this topic have garnered more attention as of late. The number of articles published in scientific databases serves as an example.

C. PLC & SCADA in Automation

SCADA systems that use open hardware and software are suggested, along with PLCs and communication interfaces that are compatible with the thinger.io local server IoT platform. A communication protocol, a master terminal unit (MTU), a remote terminal unit (RTU), and field devices make up the structure. the supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system, which communicates with the process controllers via Modbus TCP, while operating on its own subnet prevents them from being accessible from outside sources.

1) Robotics in Smart Manufacturing

Robots are renowned for their capacity to improve productivity and quality in production. This is because they are durable, accurate, and flexible. DTs have the ability to define, control, and display the behaviour of robotic systems in real-time, which enables intelligent perception, modelling, comprehension, prediction, and optimisation of production processes [10]. In addition, DT allows for thorough equipment testing and operator training by simulating real-world conditions, eliminating the risks and hazards associated with physical prototypes. In addition to reducing industrial activities' negative impact on the environment, DT improves resource use and minimises waste.

a) Automation of Tasks

Task automation uses technology to automate operations that would otherwise be performed by humans. Automating routine operations is becoming more important since it can increase productivity, decrease error rates, and make room for more complex and creative work. Job automation can increase output by decreasing the amount of time and effort needed to complete mundane tasks, freeing up users to focus on more complex and valuable tasks. When compared to manual tasks, automated ones are less likely to make mistakes, leading to better quality and happier users. This naturally transfers to increased accuracy. You may find task automation in many different industries right now. Some examples are manufacturing, healthcare, banking, and customer service.

- **Desktop Task Automation & Intelligent Agent:** The initial task automation systems and intelligent agents that were developed were predominantly desktop-oriented [11]. In Pursuit, the first task automation system to leverage the programming-by-demonstration approach, Modugno and Myers let users build abstract programs with variables, loops, and conditionals right in the interface.
- **Web Task Automation & Intelligent Agents:** The user selects samples while navigating annotated websites; d.mix's sampling approach then generates the necessary service calls to generate those elements [12].
- **Mobile Task Automation & Intelligent Agents:** The Worker-to-Robot Replacement Time" expresses the estimation of time which is necessary to substitute a human worker completely in a certain position with a robotic system.

b) AI-Driven Robotics

The rapidly expanding field of robotics technology is drawing from a wide range of disciplines, including mechanical engineering, electronics, and computer science, among others, to create robots that can mimic, help, or even replace human workers in specific jobs. A number of obstacles, however, are also plaguing this technology [13]. As a first step, robot designers must think about how their creations will fare in a variety of challenging settings, including those with tight quarters or plenty of impediments, and how their structures will need to evolve to meet the challenges of new jobs and uncharted territory. Two, in order for robots to reliably use their perception to assess outcomes, they must handle massive amounts of complicated data.

- **Autonomous Navigation and Decision-Making:** A new approach to intelligent collision avoidance and ship route planning has emerged thanks to advancements in AI and the integration of robotics and control systems.
- **Vision-Based Sensor Systems:** The impact of sensors, algorithms for machine learning, and technical developments. Using the PRISMA framework, we reviewed the applicable literature and ultimately settled on 72 publications that fulfilled our inclusion and exclusion criteria. A rundown of the most popular kinds of visual sensors.
- **Human-Robot Interaction (HRI):** A rapidly expanding area of robotics study, human-robot interaction (HRI) holds great promise for the future of robotics and its successful integration into an increasing number of daily contexts. The scope and application of HRI research is vast.

c) Integration with Digital Twins

In recent years, the concept of Digital Twin (DT) gained a lot of attention and was discussed widely in the literature about Industry 4.0 and among the big corporations, especially in IT and digital areas[14]. The term "Digital Twin" is catchy and somewhat descriptive, but it isn't entirely accurate. Consequently, two results have been produced. The idea has first and foremost become quite popular outside of its original fields of study, including aerospace engineering [15], robotics, manufacturing, and information technology. In addition, no one seems to agree on what the word actually means, where it may be used, or what is necessary to differentiate it from other technologies.

- **Real-Time Data Synchronization:** Utilized paired timestamps from peripheral and core nodes, applying a linear least squares regression method to reduce random timing variation[16]. The center node then multiplexed the received data from the peripheral nodes.
- **Simulation and Predictive Modeling:** Modeling and simulation (M&S) are critical methods used in a variety of scientific and engineering areas, allowing the representation of complex systems and processes without the limits of physical investigation[17].
- **Process Optimization:** The term "additive manufacturing" describes a type of manufacturing process that uses a method whereby a shape is built up by adding materials layer by layer. In this type of manufacturing, manufacturing data, including process-relevant data, CAD models, systems, algorithms, and similar information, is freely available for analysis and application across various workspaces.

D. Challenges and Limitations

Robotics and automation in smart manufacturing come with a lot of benefits but at the same time, there are challenges and limitations that need to be addressed first before the implementation and long-term sustainability. The mentioned challenges incorporate the financial limitations as well as technological and workforce issues are shown in Figure 1.

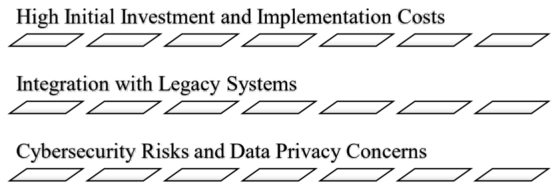

Fig. 1. Challenges Steps of Robotics and Automation

1) High Initial Investment and Implementation Costs

The high initial cost of robotics and automation in smart manufacturing is one of the most significant obstacles to adoption. Purchasing modern robotic systems, integrating technology for automation, and upgrading existing infrastructure all need a significant financial investment. Small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) frequently face these costs, making it harder for them to compete with larger corporations that have more capital resources. Maintenance, software updates, and system calibration all contributes to the long-term costs of automation.

2) Integration with Legacy Systems

Numerous manufacturing plants still rely on outdated equipment and conventional methods of production that cannot be easily automated. On the one hand, merging cutting-edge robotics, IoT, and AI with old systems creates numerous technical issues, such as the lack of compatibility, difficulties in synchronizing data, and longer periods of downtime during the switch-over.

3) Cybersecurity Risks and Data Privacy Concerns

Smart manufacturing's greater connectivity has made cybersecurity threats a top concern. The use of IoT devices, cloud computing, and AI-powered automation together with the hefty data produced make these technologies very attractive for the cybercriminals[18]. Besides, intruders can steal the trade secrets, disrupt the operations, and cause monetary losses by attacking the production systems.

III. Internet of Things (IoT) Manufacturing

The advent of AI and the Internet of Things has begun to alter the pharmaceutical industry, making these two technologies game-changers (figure 2). Artificial intelligence (AI) encompasses a wide range of technologies, including machine learning and natural language processing, among others, to enable automated, advanced analytics, bridging the gap between data exchange and real-time monitoring, and all of this without the need for human intervention or devices [19]. Compared to the old, inefficient manual procedure, these technologies have the potential to bring about a dramatic improvement in operational effectiveness, product quality, and regulatory compliance.

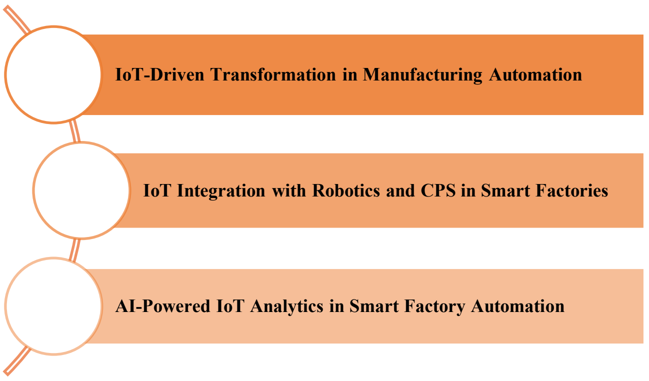

Fig. 2. IOT in Smart Manufacturing

A. IoT-Driven Transformation in Manufacturing Automation

This change not only improves working efficiency but also opens up new ways for the manufacturing sector to grow and come up with new ideas [20]. Integrating cloud computing with IIoT enabled large-scale data storage and processing to streamline the gathering and processing of real-time data. Manufacturers can then employ big data analytics for predictive maintenance and tool condition monitoring.

B. IoT Integration with Robotics and CPS in Smart Factories

The foundation of the strength is the acknowledgement of the significant influence of Industry 4.0, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, on universities and, more specifically, on the systematic preparation of engineers for jobs that do not yet exist [21]. Using qualitative data gathered from a variety of sources and publications, this analysis aims to identify the critical needs of engineering education in light of this revolutionary context. It highlights the role of the development of soft skills as a prerequisite for professional competitiveness.

C. AI-Powered IoT Analytics in Smart Factory Automation

The idea of Digital Twins (DT), the Internet of Things (IoT), and Artificial Intelligence (AI) all work together to make better decisions, automate more processes, and optimize systems in any area where AI is used. AI is all about making algorithms and systems that can learn, reason, and solve problems just like a human [22]. A network of interconnected computing devices, sensors, and other physical items that may gather and relay data across the internet; this network is known as the IoT. AI-driven DT may recreate various scenarios, e.g. occupancy pattern or equipment malfunction, in order to detect possible inefficiencies and recommend proactive maintenance.

IV. Cyber-Physical System (CPS) in Manufacturing

CPSs, or cyber-physical systems, are a new breed of digital systems that will have a huge impact on how technology advances in the future. A CPS is the product of a robust integration of cyber and physical processes. In order to control and interact with a process in the real world, it is possible to say that it is a system that deeply integrates the capabilities of computer and communication [23]. Particularly intriguing is the development of CPSs for use in mobile robotics. Problems become more apparent when trying to operate an ever-growing multi-agent system using sophisticated robotic heterogeneous hardware platforms.

A. Digital Twin Technology

DT provides a platform for smart asset management by allowing the integration of physical and virtual items at every stage of their life cycle, allowing for the replication of their real-world behaviour [24]. In a study that looked at fifteen different developing technologies, DT was named one of the top four. More effective and faster management, monitoring, and control are made possible by this cutting-edge technology.

- **Understand Digital Twin:** 3D modelling, system simulation, and functional and behavioural prototyping are some of the modern technologies upon which DT is based. The aerospace and astronautics industries have long made use of it, both in current and future aircraft designs.
- **Digital Twin for Smart Cities:** DTs have the ability to revolutionise the way cities are currently governed, leading to the rise of smart cities. The automation of smart cities is being greatly enhanced by the rapid advancement of DT technology, which is also bringing about the advantages of RPA and IDP in insurance claims [25].
- **Technological Drivers of Digital Transformation:** The digitalisation of many systems and processes across various sectors, including architecture, engineering, and construction, has been expedited by AI, cloud computing, and big data analytics. By means of modernising digitally and incorporating new technology.

B. Architecture and Components of CPS in Manufacturing

This is a difficult task to create CPS for industrial uses, whether you're starting from scratch (greenfield) or improving real systems that are already in place (brownfield). Because a poor industrial CPS usually has serious consequences (e.g., in terms of safety, productivity, cost, or business reputation), the creation is particularly difficult. Strategies for Digitalization through Smart Integration.

C. Smart Decision-Making Through CPS

Smart Cities have become a symbol of creativity and new ideas, where new technologies are combined to improve the living conditions of people and at the same time to deal with major urban problems[26]. The core of this revolution is Cyber-Physical Systems (CPSs) that are able to combine various physical elements with their computational and communication capabilities thus enabling monitoring, controlling, and optimizing city life in different areas. Recently, Symbiotic CPSs has been introduced as a new concept.

V. Literature Review

Research on Cyber-Physical Systems in Manufacturing and Smart Factory Automation is presented in this area. Table I provides a structured comparison of previous research.

Amiri, Steindl and Hollerer (2024) pointed out that the adoption and knowledge of the RAMI 4.0 in the industry were very limited, thus underlining the need for an economically feasible, complete method to integrated security and safety by design. Furthermore, we put out an extensive ontology to address the needs for security, operation, and safety in the context of IT/OT convergence. Moreover, in the context of industrial Cyber-Physical Systems (CPS), we aim to employ the model-based engineering methodology that enables the design of integrated safety and security [27].

Jochman et al. (2024) delves into how augmented reality can be intertwined with robotic manufacturing systems, highlighting the improved connectivity, processing of real-time data, and interactive visual interfaces as the main benefits. This interaction represents a giant leap in production techniques by letting the users actively take part in the process, thus, making it possible to streamline the tasks, enhance the accuracy and productivity, and eventually create a smarter factory[28].

Onu, Pradhan and Madonsela (2024) suggests that these technologies can be used to optimize manufacturing processes, increase productivity, and implement predictive maintenance strategies. Furthermore, the research examines how data analytics is the key to the smooth operation and integration of IoT and DT systems. This has been one of the contributions to the smart manufacturing research field. Ethical challenges with AI algorithms, data ownership, privacy concerns, and the fair use of IP are only a few of the major themes raised for further research [29].

K. R. Singh et al. (2024) The ability to gather and analyze massive amounts of data about production processes, equipment performance, and supply chain management in real-time is made possible by big data analytics in the cloud. Once the data is collected, it may be used to identify problem areas, forecast when maintenance will be needed, and even optimize inventory levels for cost-effectiveness and efficiency [30].

Monteiro and Garcia (2023) The Internet of Things (IoT) is a technology that can be used in industrial automation to monitor and track the performance of different assets. The development of a microprocessor-based system for controlling control valves equipped with spring/diaphragm pneumatic actuators—commonly employed in industrial process control—is the primary focus of this paper. The Industrial Process Control Laboratory at Escola Polytechnical of the University of Sao Paulo (LCPI-EPUSP) is actively developing and testing the suggested IIoT device [31].

Singh, Batheri and Dias (2023) Productivity, quality, and key performance indicators (KPIs) are just a few areas where the Industry 4.0 paradigm offers competitive advantages. It considers performance, quality, and availability as three important metrics. A machine learning-based predictive maintenance approach for the automotive sector was developed by integrating a distinct condition-monitoring-based predictive maintenance framework into the modern world. The process is detailed in this article. Also discussed are the numerous data collection techniques that went into developing a condition-based predictive maintenance system [32].

Coching et al. (2022) using MATLAB SIMULINK to model SACL's production infrastructure, reveals a potential for Cyber-Physical Systems (CPS) to automate the validation of changes based on iterative bottleneck analysis. A final model configuration was able to satisfy the predicted demand of 24,300 cores in 27 working days after multiple cycles of bottleneck analysis; each day consists of 8 total hours of work, with only 7 of those hours being productive [33].

TABLE I. COMPARATIVE LITERATURE REVIEW OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES IN AUTOMATION IN SMART FACTORIES

References	Study On	Approach	Key Findings	Challenges / Limitations	Future Direction
Amiri, Steindl & Hollerer (2024)	Adoption of RAMI 4.0 and integration of safety–security in industrial CPS	Proposed a detailed ontology for safety, security, and operational needs in IT/OT convergence and suggested model-based engineering for integrated design	Identified very low industry awareness and adoption of RAMI 4.0; highlighted need for a feasible and holistic method to embed safety and security by design	Limited real-world adoption, lack of standardized engineering workflows for integrated safety–security	Develop complete model-based design frameworks and promote industrial awareness and adoption of RAMI 4.0
Jochman et al. (2024)	Use of Augmented Reality (AR) in robotic manufacturing	Integrated AR with robotic systems to enhance interaction, visualization, and real-time decision support	AR significantly improves operator engagement, productivity, and accuracy, leading to smarter factory environments	Hardware and software integration complexity; need for high-quality real-time data; user training	More intuitive AR interfaces, improved AR-robot coordination, and wider industrial deployment
Onu, Pradhan & Madonsela (2024)	Role of IoT, Digital Twins, and analytics in smart manufacturing	Studied how IoT + DT combined with data analytics enhances operations, productivity, and predictive maintenance	Highlighted benefits of optimized processes, better productivity, and analytics-driven predictive maintenance	Ethical concerns in AI, data ownership disputes, privacy risks, and unequal access to IP	Develop ethical AI frameworks, stronger data governance, and fair IP models
K. R. Singh et al. (2024)	Cloud-based big data analytics for manufacturing	Used cloud platforms to collect, store, and analyze large-scale production and machine data in real-time	Enabled predictive maintenance, inventory optimization, and improved inter-stage communication for seamless production	High dependency on cloud infrastructure, cybersecurity risks, latency concerns	Develop secure, hybrid cloud models, and enhance real-time analytics and edge computing
Monteiro & Garcia (2023)	IIoT device for monitoring pneumatic actuators	Developed a microprocessor-based IIoT monitoring device tested on industrial valves	Demonstrated successful real-time monitoring capability for industrial valve systems, improving automation reliability	Device still in development stage; testing confined to laboratory settings	Further industrial testing, scalability improvements, and integration with broader IIoT architectures
Singh, Batheri & Dias (2023)	Predictive maintenance in the automotive sector under Industry 4.0	Designed a machine-learning-driven predictive maintenance system based on condition monitoring	Improved machine availability, quality, and performance KPIs through early fault detection	Data collection complexity, need for robust sensors, variability in machine conditions	Expand predictive models, integrate deep learning, and develop more adaptive maintenance systems
Coching et al. (2022)	CPS-based bottleneck analysis in manufacturing	Used CPS with MATLAB SIMULINK for iterative validation of manufacturing improvements	Achieved production target of 24,300 cores in 27 working days through cycle-based bottleneck analysis	Simulation accuracy depends on model quality; real-world deviations may occur	Enhance real-time CPS integration, validate models in live factory e

VI. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

Smart factories are undergoing a revolution due to automation that is a result of Industry 4.0 technologies like Robotics, IoT, and CPS coming together. The use of next-generation systems such as digital twins, edge computing, and robotic process automation (RPA) has brought about quick decision-making, greater operational efficiency, and higher product quality, among other benefits. However, there are still some issues that need to be resolved, such as data privacy, system interoperability, and security. In the meantime, AI-enabled automation and IIoT connectivity are getting more and more powerful, eventually leading to the manufacturing of more adaptive, independent, and scalable solutions. One of the main factors determining the future of these technologies will be the resolution of integration challenges and the creation of a single digital ecosystem that allows for innovation, sustainability, and modern manufacturing's competitiveness.

The future of work is to create frameworks that are more scalable and interoperable and that unite Robotics, IoT, and CPS in a smooth manner between various manufacturing setups. Communication standardization, secure data exchange, and AI-powered predictive maintenance in real-time scenarios should be the focus of research. It is also important to continue the work on making energy use more efficient, and on security, and automation at a lower cost. Future research will also focus on human-robot collaboration, digital twins for optimization of lifecycles and complex simulations, and other related topics.

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