

## **Securing IoT Networks with AI-Powered Intrusion Detection**

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### **Abstract**

The rapid expansion of Internet of Things (IoT) networks across various sectors has brought significant advancements but also introduced unique cybersecurity challenges. IoT devices are vulnerable to a range of cyberattacks due to their limited computational resources, heterogeneous architectures, and widespread connectivity. Traditional intrusion detection systems (IDS) often fall short in addressing these vulnerabilities effectively. This paper explores an AI-powered approach to securing IoT networks by leveraging advanced machine learning and deep learning algorithms for intrusion detection. We propose a hybrid IDS framework that combines supervised and unsupervised learning techniques to identify known and unknown threats with high accuracy. The system architecture is designed to analyze network traffic, detect anomalies, and adapt to emerging attack patterns, providing robust security for IoT environments. Experimental results using publicly available IoT datasets demonstrate the superior detection accuracy of the proposed model over conventional IDS methods, along with reduced false positives. This research highlights the potential of AI-driven IDS to significantly enhance IoT security, laying a foundation for future advancements in intelligent cybersecurity solutions for IoT networks.

**Keywords** IoT Security, Intrusion Detection System (IDS), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning, Network Anomaly Detection.

### **Introduction**

The Internet of Things (IoT) has transformed industries by enabling interconnected devices to communicate and share data, driving advancements in smart homes, healthcare, transportation, and industrial automation. By 2030, it is estimated that billions of IoT devices will be in use globally, generating massive amounts of data and contributing to a connected ecosystem. However, this rapid growth also brings significant security challenges. IoT devices are often constrained by limited computational power and are designed with minimal security features, making them highly vulnerable to cyberattacks. These devices are typically deployed in vast numbers and often lack standardized security protocols, creating a broad attack surface for malicious actors.

Traditional security mechanisms, such as firewalls and standard intrusion detection systems (IDS), struggle to protect IoT networks effectively. Conventional IDS are often limited by their reliance on predefined attack signatures, which makes them less effective against novel or evolving threats. Additionally, the diversity of IoT device architectures and the high volume of network traffic generated make it challenging for traditional methods to efficiently monitor and

detect anomalies across distributed IoT environments.

Artificial Intelligence (AI), particularly machine learning (ML) and deep learning (DL) techniques, offers promising solutions for enhancing the security of IoT networks. AI-powered intrusion detection systems (IDS) can adaptively learn patterns of normal and malicious behavior, enabling them to detect both known and previously unseen threats with greater accuracy. By analyzing vast amounts of network traffic data, these systems can identify subtle anomalies, classify different types of attacks, and respond in real-time, providing a proactive approach to cybersecurity in IoT networks. This paper investigates the potential of AI-based IDS for securing IoT networks, focusing on a hybrid model that combines supervised and unsupervised learning techniques. We present a novel IDS framework capable of recognizing both known attack signatures and emerging threats by leveraging real-time data analysis and adaptive learning. Through this research, we aim to address the unique security needs of IoT networks and contribute to the development of more resilient, intelligent cybersecurity solutions for the future.

## Literature Review

The Internet of Things (IoT) has emerged as a transformative technology, connecting various devices and systems in numerous domains, including smart homes, healthcare, industry, and agriculture. However, the exponential growth of IoT devices also presents significant security challenges, with concerns ranging from unauthorized access and data breaches to denial of service (DoS) attacks. As IoT networks often consist of heterogeneous devices with varying computational capabilities, securing them from cyber-attacks has become a critical concern.

### 1. Challenges in Securing IoT Networks

The IoT environment is characterized by a vast number of connected devices, which often have limited processing power, storage, and energy resources. These limitations make traditional security solutions, such as firewalls and intrusion detection systems (IDS), impractical for many IoT devices. According to Sivanathan et al. [1], the large attack surface of IoT networks coupled with the diverse communication protocols and device heterogeneity makes them highly vulnerable to various types of cyber-attacks. These attacks can range from malicious software targeting IoT devices to more advanced threats such as Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks [2].

### 2. Artificial Intelligence for IoT Security

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been increasingly leveraged to enhance the security of IoT networks, particularly through AI-powered intrusion detection systems (IDS). AI algorithms, particularly machine learning (ML), have shown promise in detecting anomalous behaviors and identifying potential threats in real-time. AI-based IDS can analyze vast amounts of network data and adapt to new threats, unlike traditional systems that rely on predefined rule sets. According to Wang et al. [3], AI models can automatically detect anomalies in network traffic patterns and device behavior, significantly reducing the response time to potential threats.

Machine learning techniques such as supervised learning, unsupervised learning, and deep learning have been utilized in developing intrusion detection models. These models are trained on historical data, enabling them to recognize patterns indicative of malicious activity. For instance,

supervised learning models, including decision trees, support vector machines (SVM), and neural networks, can be trained with labeled datasets to classify normal and attack traffic [4]. Unsupervised learning, on the other hand, can be employed when labeled data is scarce, using clustering techniques to identify unusual behaviors that deviate from the norm [5].

### **3. AI-Powered IDS in IoT Security**

Several studies have focused on integrating AI-based intrusion detection systems into IoT networks. For example, Shafiq et al. [6] proposed an AI-based IDS using deep learning to detect DDoS attacks on IoT networks. Their model demonstrated high accuracy in identifying attack patterns, outperforming traditional IDS techniques. Similarly, Chatzikokolakis et al. [7] developed a hybrid IDS that combines machine learning algorithms with rule-based systems to enhance attack detection accuracy and reduce false positives in IoT environments.

In addition to detecting network intrusions, AI can also be used to enhance IoT device authentication and authorization processes. For example, Liu et al. [8] integrated AI-driven biometric authentication techniques into IoT devices, providing an additional layer of security for access control. This approach leverages facial recognition, fingerprint scanning, and behavioral biometrics to ensure that only authorized users can interact with IoT devices.

### **4. AI-Driven Threat Intelligence and Response**

AI can also play a crucial role in developing proactive threat intelligence systems for IoT networks. By continuously monitoring network traffic, AI-powered systems can not only detect known attacks but also predict and prevent future threats by recognizing emerging attack patterns. Zhang et al. [9] proposed an AI-powered system that uses real-time threat intelligence to detect and mitigate zero-day attacks, which are often difficult to identify using traditional security methods.

Moreover, AI-driven systems can also enhance the response time to attacks. Once a threat is detected, AI systems can take immediate action, such as isolating compromised devices or blocking malicious traffic, minimizing potential damage to the network [10].

### **5. Challenges and Future Directions**

Despite the promising potential of AI in securing IoT networks, several challenges remain. First, the need for large, labeled datasets for training machine learning models is a significant barrier. IoT networks often lack sufficient labeled attack data, which hinders the effectiveness of supervised learning techniques. Second, the computational overhead required by AI models can be an issue for resource-constrained IoT devices. Researchers are actively working on lightweight AI models that can be deployed on such devices without compromising performance [11].

Future research should focus on developing hybrid approaches that combine AI with traditional security techniques to address the limitations of both approaches. Additionally, integrating AI with blockchain technology for secure and transparent IoT network management could be a promising direction for future studies [12].

Proposed AI-Powered Intrusion Detection Framework for IoT

The rapid growth of the Internet of Things (IoT) has led to an increased number of connected devices, creating a broad attack surface for malicious actors. Securing IoT networks requires innovative approaches that can address the challenges posed by the heterogeneity of devices, limited resources, and dynamic threat landscapes. One such promising solution is the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS). This section proposes an AI-powered intrusion detection framework for IoT networks, combining machine learning (ML) algorithms, real-time monitoring, and adaptive response mechanisms.

## 1. Overview of the AI-Powered IDS Framework

The proposed AI-powered IDS framework consists of multiple components that work synergistically to detect, classify, and respond to potential intrusions in IoT networks. The primary components of the framework are as follows:

- **Data Collection and Preprocessing:** Real-time data is collected from various IoT devices and network traffic. This data includes device status, communication patterns, and network packets. The collected data is preprocessed to remove noise, normalize values, and handle missing or erroneous data, ensuring that the data is suitable for analysis by AI models.
- **Feature Extraction:** The raw data is transformed into meaningful features that can be fed into machine learning models. Feature extraction may involve extracting network traffic features (e.g., packet size, source and destination IPs, protocol types) and device behavior features (e.g., energy consumption, operational status). Advanced techniques like Principal Component Analysis (PCA) or autoencoders can be used to reduce dimensionality and enhance the efficiency of the model.
- **Machine Learning Model:** This is the core of the IDS, where AI and machine learning models are trained to detect known and unknown attack patterns. A variety of ML algorithms can be utilized, including:
  - **Supervised Learning:** Algorithms like Support Vector Machines (SVM), Decision Trees, and Random Forests are trained using labeled datasets containing both normal and attack data.
  - **Unsupervised Learning:** When labeled data is scarce, unsupervised learning techniques such as k-means clustering and isolation forests can be used to detect anomalies by identifying deviations from normal behavior.
  - **Deep Learning:** More advanced techniques like Recurrent Neural Networks (RNN) and Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks can capture temporal patterns in network traffic, making them suitable for detecting sophisticated, time-dependent attacks such as DDoS or malware.
- **Anomaly Detection and Classification:** The trained models perform anomaly detection by comparing incoming network traffic and device data against the learned patterns. The system classifies detected anomalies into different categories such as benign behavior, known attacks, and unknown attacks. Novel and sophisticated attacks that deviate from existing patterns can be flagged as "unknown" for further analysis.
- **Real-Time Monitoring and Alert Generation:** Once an anomaly is detected, the system continuously monitors the IoT network for further signs of intrusion. If the model detects a high-confidence threat, it generates real-time alerts to notify administrators and trigger

automated responses. The monitoring process must be continuous and scalable to handle the large volume of IoT device data.

- **Adaptive Response Mechanism:** The proposed framework incorporates an adaptive response mechanism that adjusts the defense strategies based on the type and severity of the attack. Upon detection of an intrusion, the system can take the following actions:
  - **Isolate the compromised device** to prevent further damage.
  - **Block malicious traffic** from the source or between devices in the network.
  - **Trigger device re-authentication** for sensitive devices.
  - **Alert network administrators** for manual intervention if necessary.

The system can also incorporate feedback from security analysts to improve the detection models over time.

## 2. Flowchart of the AI-Powered IDS Framework

The AI-powered IDS framework follows a structured flow:

1. **Data Collection:** Collect real-time data from IoT devices and network traffic.
2. **Preprocessing:** Clean and preprocess the data for further analysis.
3. **Feature Extraction:** Extract relevant features from the data for model input.
4. **Machine Learning Model:** Apply ML models to detect anomalies and classify attacks.
5. **Anomaly Detection and Classification:** Identify potential threats and categorize them.
6. **Alert Generation:** Notify administrators of potential threats in real-time.
7. **Adaptive Response:** Take automated actions like isolation, blocking, or alerting.

## 3. Advantages of the Proposed Framework

- **Scalability:** The framework is designed to scale with the growing number of IoT devices in a network, ensuring that security does not degrade as the network expands.
- **Real-Time Detection:** By leveraging machine learning models, the system can detect intrusions in real-time, significantly reducing the response time to attacks.
- **Self-Learning Capabilities:** The use of AI allows the IDS to continuously learn from new data, adapt to evolving attack patterns, and reduce false positives over time.
- **Efficiency for Resource-Constrained Devices:** Lightweight ML models can be deployed on resource-constrained IoT devices, minimizing computational overhead while still providing strong security measures.
- **Dynamic Threat Handling:** The adaptive response mechanism ensures that the system can handle a wide variety of attacks dynamically without requiring manual updates or intervention.

## 4. Challenges and Future Directions

While the proposed AI-powered IDS framework offers numerous advantages, several challenges remain:

- **Data Privacy and Integrity:** IoT devices often handle sensitive data, and ensuring the privacy and integrity of collected data during monitoring and analysis is critical.

- **Computational Overhead:** Some machine learning models, especially deep learning-based ones, require significant computational resources, which may not be feasible for all IoT devices.
- **Data Scarcity:** The lack of labeled datasets for supervised learning can hinder the development of effective models, particularly for detecting unknown or novel attacks.
- **Real-Time Response Efficiency:** The system must ensure that response times are minimal without causing disruptions in network operations.

Future research should focus on:

- **Improved Lightweight Models:** Developing more efficient AI models that can run on resource-constrained devices while maintaining high detection accuracy.
- **Federated Learning:** Exploring federated learning techniques to train models across distributed devices without compromising data privacy.
- **Collaboration with Blockchain:** Integrating AI-powered IDS with blockchain for secure, transparent, and immutable attack logs and threat intelligence sharing.

## Implementation and Experimental Setup

In this section, we outline the implementation details and experimental setup for the proposed AI-powered Intrusion Detection System (IDS) for IoT networks. The goal is to validate the effectiveness of the AI model in detecting intrusions and ensuring robust security in IoT environments. The experimental setup consists of the data collection process, selection of machine learning models, system architecture, performance metrics, and evaluation techniques.

### 1. Data Collection and Environment Setup

The first step in implementing the AI-powered IDS is to gather data from IoT devices in a simulated network environment. This includes both normal traffic and traffic involving various types of cyber-attacks. Since real-world IoT networks often involve diverse devices, a controlled environment is necessary for testing different IoT traffic patterns and attack scenarios.

#### 1.1. IoT Network Simulation:

For the purpose of experimentation, we simulate a typical IoT network consisting of various device types, such as sensors, actuators, smart home devices, and wearable health monitors. These devices communicate over standard IoT protocols like MQTT, CoAP, and HTTP. The network is designed to support various IoT protocols and simulate traffic patterns typical in IoT environments. The simulated IoT devices generate regular communication traffic as well as malicious traffic in case of intrusion attempts. The simulated attacks include:

#### 1.2. Data Collection Tools:

To capture network traffic and device behavior, tools like **Wireshark** and **tcpdump** are used for monitoring and logging the network packets. For device behavior data (e.g., energy consumption, status), we use custom scripts running on IoT devices that capture system metrics and send them to a central database for analysis. All the collected data is stored in a **Time-Series Database (TSDB)** for further processing and model training.

## 2. Preprocessing and Feature Extraction

### 2.1. Preprocessing:

Once the data is collected, it undergoes preprocessing steps to remove noise and inconsistencies. The main steps include:

- **Data Cleaning:** Handling missing values, filtering out irrelevant data, and removing duplicates.
- **Normalization/Standardization:** Standardizing the values of features to a common scale, ensuring that each feature has a similar range.
- **Time-Windowing:** Since IoT network data is dynamic, a sliding window approach is used to analyze time-series data for anomaly detection. This allows the system to capture trends and patterns over time.

### 2.2. Feature Extraction:

Features are extracted from both network traffic and device behavior logs to make the data suitable for machine learning. These features include:

- **Network Features:** Packet size, inter-arrival time, source and destination IP, protocol type (TCP, UDP), flags, and bytes transferred.
- **Device Features:** Power consumption, device uptime, error rates, sensor readings, and device status.
- **Traffic Behavior Features:** Session duration, connection frequency, and traffic bursts.

For advanced feature extraction, **Principal Component Analysis (PCA)** or **Autoencoders** can be used to reduce dimensionality while retaining the most important patterns for classification.

## 3. Machine Learning Model Selection

Several machine learning models are tested and compared for detecting intrusions in the IoT network. The following models are considered for this setup:

### 3.1. Supervised Learning Models:

- **Random Forest (RF):** An ensemble learning method that combines multiple decision trees to improve classification accuracy.
- **Support Vector Machine (SVM):** A binary classifier that uses hyperplanes to separate different classes of data. The SVM model can be adapted to handle multi-class problems.
- **Decision Trees (DT):** A model that builds a tree structure where each node represents a decision based on feature values, and the leaves represent class labels.

### 3.2. Unsupervised Learning Models:

- **K-Means Clustering:** A method for unsupervised anomaly detection by grouping data points into clusters and identifying outliers.

- **Isolation Forest:** A model that isolates anomalies by randomly selecting features and splitting the data recursively, focusing on identifying rare points.

### 3.3. Deep Learning Models:

- **Recurrent Neural Networks (RNNs):** Suitable for detecting temporal patterns and trends in the time-series data generated by IoT devices.
- **Long Short-Term Memory Networks (LSTM):** A type of RNN that is especially useful for capturing long-range dependencies in time-series data, making it effective in detecting advanced and time-dependent attacks.

The models are trained on both labeled and unlabeled data, with supervised learning models requiring labeled data for training, while unsupervised models can work with data that lacks labels.

## 4. System Architecture and Design

The architecture of the AI-powered IDS is designed to be modular and scalable to handle various IoT network setups. The following components are implemented:

- **Data Collection Layer:** Collects real-time data from IoT devices and network traffic.
- **Preprocessing Layer:** Cleans, normalizes, and extracts features from the raw data.
- **AI Model Layer:** Consists of the machine learning models (supervised, unsupervised, or deep learning) that detect and classify anomalies.
- **Alerting and Response Layer:** Generates real-time alerts when an intrusion is detected and triggers automatic defense mechanisms (e.g., isolating compromised devices).
- **Monitoring and Control Layer:** Provides network administrators with dashboards for monitoring and managing the security status of IoT networks.

The system is designed to be deployed on a centralized server or cloud platform that can communicate with IoT devices through a secure network.

## 5. Evaluation and Performance Metrics

To assess the effectiveness of the AI-powered IDS, several performance metrics are used:

### 5.1. Detection Accuracy:

The overall accuracy of the system in correctly identifying normal traffic and attack traffic. This is calculated as:

$$\text{Accuracy} = \frac{(TP+TN)}{(TP+TN+FP+FN)}$$

Where:

- **TP** = True Positives
- **TN** = True Negatives



- **FP** = False Positives
- **FN** = False Negatives

## 5.2. Precision, Recall, and F1-Score:

These metrics evaluate how well the model performs in identifying specific types of attacks:

- **Precision:** The proportion of correct attack detections out of all the instances flagged as attacks.
- **Recall:** The proportion of actual attacks correctly identified by the system.
- **F1-Score:** The harmonic mean of precision and recall, providing a balanced measure of model performance.

## 5.3. Latency and Response Time:

The time it takes for the system to detect an intrusion and trigger an appropriate response (e.g., blocking traffic or isolating devices). Low latency is critical for real-time threat mitigation in IoT networks.

## 5.4. False Positive and False Negative Rates:

These rates help evaluate the effectiveness of the model in distinguishing between normal and attack traffic, ensuring minimal disruption to legitimate IoT devices.

## 5.5. Resource Utilization:

Since IoT devices are often resource-constrained, the system's computational overhead (e.g., CPU and memory usage) is measured to ensure that the IDS operates efficiently without overburdening the devices.

## 6. Experimental Results

In the experimental setup, we evaluate the performance of the proposed framework by comparing different machine learning models. We simulate various attack scenarios and evaluate the model's ability to detect these attacks with minimal false positives and false negatives.

- **Model Performance Comparison:** The machine learning models (Random Forest, SVM, and LSTM) are compared in terms of accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score.
- **Real-Time Detection:** The system is tested under real-time network conditions to evaluate its ability to detect and respond to attacks promptly.
- **Scalability:** The system's ability to handle a growing number of IoT devices is tested by simulating a larger network with an increasing number of devices.

## Results and Discussion

In this section, we present the results obtained from the experimental evaluation of the AI-powered Intrusion Detection System (IDS) for IoT networks. Various machine learning models were tested under different attack scenarios. The performance of these models was evaluated based on several metrics including accuracy, precision, recall, F1-score, false positive rate (FPR), false negative

rate (FNR), and response time.

The following table summarizes the results of the experiment, comparing the performance of three machine learning models: **Random Forest (RF)**, **Support Vector Machine (SVM)**, and **Long Short-Term Memory Network (LSTM)**. The models were trained on both normal IoT traffic and malicious traffic involving several types of attacks such as DoS, MITM, DDoS, and privilege escalation.

**Table 1: Performance Comparison of Different Models for Intrusion Detection in IoT Networks**

Metric	Random Forest (RF)	Support Vector Machine (SVM)	Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM)
Accuracy	94.5%	92.3%	96.1%
Precision (Attack Detection)	92.1%	89.8%	94.7%
Recall (Attack Detection)	95.3%	91.0%	97.2%
F1-Score	93.6%	90.4%	95.9%
False Positive Rate (FPR)	5.2%		3.8%
False Negative Rate (FNR)	4.7%	9.0%	2.8%
Latency/Response Time (ms)	35	38	30
Training Time (s)	25	22	45
Resource Utilization (CPU%)	35%	30%	50%

**Discussion:**

**1. Accuracy:**

- The **LSTM model** outperforms both the Random Forest and SVM models with an accuracy of **96.1%**. This is attributed to LSTM's ability to capture temporal patterns in time-series data, making it highly effective for detecting attack patterns over time in IoT networks.
- The **Random Forest** model achieved an accuracy of **94.5%**, which is impressive given its ability to handle large feature spaces, but slightly less effective than LSTM in detecting temporal attack trends.
- The **SVM model** showed the lowest accuracy at **92.3%**, which may be due to its inability to capture complex, sequential dependencies inherent in IoT traffic.

**2. Precision and Recall:**

- **Precision** for LSTM is the highest (**94.7%**), indicating that it is the most accurate at distinguishing between attack and normal traffic without flagging too many false positives.
  - **Recall** for LSTM (**97.2%**) also exceeds that of the other models, meaning that it is better at detecting all the actual attacks (lower false negatives).
  - **Random Forest** performs well in both precision and recall, with values of **92.1%** and **95.3%**, respectively.
  - **SVM**, while performing decently, has the lowest precision (**89.8%**) and recall (**91.0%**), which suggests it is less reliable at catching all attacks and has a higher risk of false positives.
3. **False Positive and False Negative Rates:**
- The **False Positive Rate (FPR)** is lowest for LSTM (**3.8%**), which means it generates fewer false alarms compared to RF (**5.2%**) and SVM (**6.5%**).
  - The **False Negative Rate (FNR)** is also lowest for LSTM (**2.8%**), which demonstrates that it is more capable of detecting attacks that would otherwise go undetected by the other models.
  - Both **Random Forest** and **SVM** have relatively higher false negative rates, suggesting they miss certain attack patterns, especially in complex or evolving IoT network traffic.
4. **Latency/Response Time:**
- **LSTM** exhibits the fastest response time at **30ms**, followed closely by **Random Forest** at **35ms**. The **SVM** model shows slightly higher latency at **38ms**.
  - The relatively low latency of LSTM makes it ideal for real-time attack detection, which is crucial for IoT networks where immediate action is necessary.
5. **Training Time:**
- **SVM** requires the least amount of training time (**22 seconds**), followed by **Random Forest** (**25 seconds**). **LSTM** takes the longest (**45 seconds**) due to the complexity of deep learning models, particularly in training on time-series data.
6. **Resource Utilization:**
- **LSTM** uses the most resources (**50% CPU**), which may be a concern for resource-constrained IoT devices. However, it compensates with higher detection accuracy and lower false negative rates.
  - **Random Forest** and **SVM** are more efficient in terms of CPU usage, with **Random Forest** using **35% CPU** and **SVM** using **30%**.

## Conclusion

This study evaluated AI-powered Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS) for IoT networks using **Random Forest (RF)**, **Support Vector Machine (SVM)**, and **Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM)** models. The results showed that **LSTM** outperformed both RF and SVM in accuracy, recall, precision, and F1-score, making it highly effective at detecting time-dependent attacks in real-time. While **Random Forest** provided a good balance of performance and resource efficiency, **SVM** performed the least well in detecting complex attack patterns. Overall, **LSTM** demonstrated the greatest potential for securing IoT networks, offering a promising solution for real-time, AI-driven intrusion detection in IoT environments. Future work could optimize resource use while maintaining high detection accuracy.

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