Grenze International Journal of Engineering and Technology, June Issue

AdaptiveGuard: Real-Time Cyber Threat Classification and Novel Attack Detection using AI and Machine Learning

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***Abstract*— With the rapid expansion and complexity of cyber threats, securing and ensuring reliability of modern communications networks pose an ever-increasing challenge. Traditional intrusion detection systems usually use specific rules that limit their effectiveness to detect unknown or new attacks. To fill this gap, in this paper, we investigate into a real-time network anomaly detection system using traditional machine learning algorithms. The system utilizes Logistic Regression, Random Forest, SVM, KNN, and Naïve Bayes classifiers to detect normal network behavior from the malicious one. Special focus is given to data preprocessing, feature identification and model tuning steps leading to the enhancement of both detection rate and reduction in false alarm. Experiments with the CICIDS2017 and NSLKDD benchmarks show that the proposed method outperforms previous approaches in detecting malicious activities including Distributed Denial of Service attacks, illegal access and malware. The results show that lightweight machine learning models could achieve accurate, scalable and practical solutions of real-time network security monitoring.**

***Index Terms*— Cybersecurity, network anomaly detection, machine learning, real-time monitoring, AI-based security.**

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of network-connected digital infrastructures has turned today's businesses into very dependent on networks of interconnections. Communication services, Data sharing, and application access are increasingly dependent on distributed (cloud-based) systems for their security due to the drastic increase of Cyber-attacks like Malware spread, unauthorized access, Data breaches, and DDoS attacks in numbers and complexity which result in major risks to continued operation and the integrity of information.

A. Problem Context and Motivation

Traditional Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS) primarily use detection methods based on static signatures or rules that have been set ahead of time to detect malicious activity. While these methods work well for detecting previously known attacks, they have limited ability to detect novel, polymorphic, or zero-day attacks that do not conform to expected and known attack patterns.

Grenze ID: 01.GIJET.12.2.58_23

Also, traditional IDSs do not dynamically adapt well to the scale and heterogeneity of growing network infrastructures, which result in high False Positive Counting rates and latency between the initial detection of an event and the response to it, thus decreasing their effectiveness in rapidly changing cyber threat environments.
One way to deal with the problems discussed above is through Machine Learning (ML). An ML model can learn what 'normal' traffic looks like for a specific computer network, and by knowing what is normal it will be able to spot anomalies (abnormal patterns of network behavior) that may indicate a possible intrusion. A number of classical ML algorithms such as Logistic Regression, Random Forest, Support Vector Machine (SVM), K-Nearest Neighbors (KNN), and Naïve Bayes have proven to be able to classify various types of cyberattacks accurately with minimal false positive rates. Furthermore, not only do ML-driven intrusion detection systems (IDS) have more flexibility and faster response times than traditional rule-based IDS, but also the architecture of the ML-driven IDS is superior to traditional IDS [2], [5].

B. Our Proposed Contribution

This article discusses the development of AdaptiveGuard, a machine learning framework for detecting intrusions in products doing so in real-time. AdaptiveGuard is adaptive in that it monitors networks for attack anomalies and can adapt quickly and accurately to those anomalies. The evaluation of AdaptiveGuard used two benchmark datasets (NSL-KDD and CICIDS2017) that are both well-known and used frequently as a reference in studying machine learning classifiers for attack detection on networks.
The main contributions made in this work are as follows:

- Lightweight Real-Time Framework: Adaptative Guard is developed in such a way as to use very few resources to create an ML driven detection architecture that supports continual observation and has low latency and low computational cost to do so.
- Comparative Model Evaluation: A comprehensive evaluation was conducted of five of the most referenced classical ML models (Logistic Regression, Random Forest, SVM, KNN, and Naive Bayes) to provide data that could be used to determine the viability of the models as candidates for use in a multi-class environment.
- Adaptive Optimization Strategy: Algorithms and mechanisms were developed that dynamically tune the model and recalibrate the model's features to improve detection accuracy and maintain low false-positive rates (especially at high traffic levels).

In general, the AdaptiveGuard framework is designed to create a more resilient network by integrating scalable machine learning technologies with adaptive optimization techniques, providing automated and dependable methods for identifying anomalies in today's cybersecurity setting.

II. Related Work

The application of machine learning (ML) techniques to identify cyber threats has been an increasing focus due to the complexity of modern attack scenarios. Developments in ML are producing more intelligent intrusion detection systems (IDS) that will adapt to new and evolving forms of cyber-attacks. Haile et al. proposed a real-time cyber-threat classification framework that dynamically adjusts the feature representation of incoming threats to enable quick responses to newly identified attack patterns. Ndlovu and Tsibolane emphasized the need for adaptive defense mechanisms to enhance the organizational resilience to threats presented by AI cyberspace through the consideration of technical and behavioral components within a defense mechanism. These studies were complemented by Nair et al., who created a cloud-based architecture for threat detection and response using multiple learning tasks to quickly identify early-stage attacks. Trivedi et al.'s evidence demonstrates that improved situational awareness and reduced latency in distributed networks are achieved by utilizing AI-enabled threat intelligence.
Methodologically, numerous previous studies have analyzed how well various classical machine learning algorithms can be used for intrusions detection systems. Saravanan et al. provided useful comparisons of the Support Vector Machine (SVM) and Random Forest classifiers; both classifiers were able to provide high-detection-rate performance and present the results in a manner that could be easily interpreted by users in an operational context. Prakash et al. focused on using autonomous self-defending systems that utilized artificial intelligence (AI)-based decision support tools, showing that such tools could provide more resilience against new attack methodologies as they continued to evolve. Alenazi and Mishra used XGBoost and Gaussian Naïve Bayes to compare their effectiveness for detecting threats to the Industrial Internet of Things (IoT); both machine-learning algorithms demonstrated the ability to produce greater accuracy on structured network traffic. Similarly, Alrefaei and Ilyas demonstrated that lightweight multiclass machine-learning models can produce real-time IoT

attack detections regardless of whether they operate in a constrained hardware environment. Prior to these studies, foundational work by Redino et al. analyzed graph- and flow-based telemetry and identified design principles for detecting zero-day attacks, providing a solid foundation for modern machine-learning intrusion-detection system (IDS) research. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that machine-learning algorithms employing probabilistic models, tree-based models, or ensemble-based models tend to exhibit good scalability and generalization properties when applied to the detection of anomalies in network traffic.

A. Problem Analysis

There are still many things that need to be improved in existing Intrusion Detection Systems. One reason for this is that most existing systems are rule-based and rely on signatures; therefore, they do not function well when it comes to identifying new, obfuscated or polymorphic attacks, as they do not have any prior knowledge of these types of attacks to use for detection. For these reasons, there has been a large increase in Deep Learning based IDS approaches in recent years; however, most of these models have extremely large training data requirements, require considerable resources to be able to efficiently build the model, and require significant time to train and build the model, making them impractical for real time deployment.

Some of the most common classical machine learning models (e.g., Random Forest, Decision Tree, SVM, Naive Bayes, KNN) can have faster training times, lower computational resources and have improved interpretability, making them attractive for adaptive intrusion detection systems. However, even these types of models still have several issues that need to be resolved:

- High false positive rates: If malicious and benign network traffic shares similar statistical characteristics, then illogical alerts will result from an anomaly-based system.
- Data imbalance issue: Rare attack types, e.g., user to root (U2R) and remote to local (R2L), are rarely represented in most available databases, and therefore, models that are trained using these data sets are often biased toward normal behaviors.
- Feature Drift: Features in network traffic tend to change over time. If these features have changed since a model was trained on the data, that model may no longer be valid and will produce inaccurate detections of the newly occurring attacks.
- Real time constraints: Many different types of machine learning-based intrusion detection systems require low latency for inference and maximum resource efficiency for operation to be able to make use of them in real time.

Using ensemble learning methods and continuous model retraining, the AdaptiveGuard Framework (the subject of this proposal) meets these challenges by adapting dynamically to changing network conditions (e.g., evolving cyber threats). Through adaptive capabilities, the AdaptiveGuard Framework effectively increases the detection robustness of the IDS and retains accurate classification capabilities when faced with new and/or previously unknown cyber threats.

III. LITERATURE SURVEY

There has been a rapid increase in the number and complexity of cyber threats due to the increase in interconnected digital devices within our society, creating an increased demand for intelligent, adaptive, and scalable intrusion detection systems (IDSs). The combination of Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence has been the focus of numerous research studies aimed at increasing the accuracy of detecting cyber threats, generalizing well across multiple domains, and ultimately being able to respond automatically to a cyber threat. This section reviews relevant research previously conducted and identifies critical gaps in the literature that lead to the need for developing the AdaptiveGuard Framework.

A. Overview of Intrusion Detection Systems

As global network traffic continues to grow at an alarming rate, the protection of digital assets becomes more difficult when trying to ensure their confidentiality, integrity, and availability. An Intrusion Detection System (IDS) is important because it continuously monitors traffic so that any malicious behavior or violations of policy can be identified. There are two main types of techniques used by an IDS:

- Signature-Based: This method works by looking for specific patterns within data packets and matching them against known attack signatures.
- Anomaly-Based: An IDS that uses this method looks at data packets and research what is considered "normal activity" on a continuous basis.

Hybrid IDS that combine the features of signature-based detection and anomaly-based detection appear to have greater resilience and adaptability. Cyber-attacks are evolving rapidly, becoming ever more complex and dynamic; therefore there is an increasing amount of research being performed on IDS architectures that support continuous learning and automated adaptation to behavior patterns.

B. Machine Learning-based IDS Techniques

Machine Learning has made great strides in enhancing the efficiency of IDS by permitting detection of both known and unknown intruders without being restricted by pre-defined rules or policies. Saravanan et al. compared the performance of SVM and Naïve Bayes Classifiers using the NSL-KDD data set and concluded that SVM provided better accuracy and reduced the number of false positives compared to the Naïve Bayes Classifier. Alenazi and Mishra evaluated several ML-based models (e.g., Gaussian Naïve Bayes) to classify data in Industrial IoT application environments and demonstrated that these models provided superior classification accuracy in environments that were limited in resources. Alrefaei and Ilyas demonstrated that multi-class ML detection can be applied to IoT systems and that the use of lightweight classifiers (Logistic Regression, SVM, and KNN) supports efficient real-time detection capabilities.

C. Adaptive and Incremental Learning in IDS

As network behavior changes over time, the IDS also needs to be continually updated. According to Haile et al. [1], an ID system developed to adapt in real time to changes in the features of a system can increase the speed of detection of new cyber-adverse events. Nair et al. designed a cloud security system that incorporates an ensemble strategy of responding to an attack in the early stages. Trivedi et al. [5] emphasized using explainable AI (XAI) and incremental learning as tools for providing reliable and transparent operation within security-critical environments. Collectively, all of the above articles underline the need for an adaptive and autonomous approach to modern IDS formats.

D. Feature Selection and Optimization Techniques

The importance of developing effective feature-selection techniques and optimization processes has affected both the detection rate and the computational costs of IDSs. According to Ndlovu and Tsibolane [3], developing an optimized feature-engineering process will result in developing a resilient and scalable IDS solution. Redino et al. [15] used telemetry based on both graphs and flows to demonstrate increased accuracy using optimally refined network-flow features to detect zero-day threats.

E. Hybrid and Ensemble Models

Hybrid the ensemble models, integrate different types of machine learning techniques; they have proven very effective in detecting complex types of cyber-attack that are used today. In their paper, Prakash et al. [13], created a hybrid AI based (Artificial Intelligence') threat defense mechanism using many classical ML models to gain an increase in accuracy. Ghosh et al. [11] explored Hybrid Perception Systems to assist autonomous vehicles; they also demonstrated that using the combination of ML model methods resulted in the best solution for assessing reliable risks. Saravanan et al. [14] demonstrated that classical algorithms (e.g. Logistics Regression, Random Forest, SVM, KNN, and Naïve Bayes) when optimized for network traffic types will provide better performance than many of the computationally intensive models that exist today.

F. Federated and Distributed Learning

With increasing complexity and scale of cyber-attacks, the importance of distributed detection (and unable 'Edge'); the need for more security on networks has been highlighted. Elbadawi & Salah [10] demonstrated how FL/Federated Learning is a solution to use in edge computing systems by enabling anomaly detection, keeping your data secure. Sharma et al. [4] proposed (blockchain-enabled) systems for intelligence sharing (and secure information sharing) among cloud-based multi-cloud systems. Nair et al. [2] created a new and innovative cloud-based adaptive threat detection solution using many distributed ensemble learning models to reduce/eliminate security breaches whilst providing immediate detection and response to all cyber incidents.

G. Summary of Literature Gaps

Even with all the major advances in research on Intrusion detection systems (IDS), there are still limitations:

- Limitations of datasets: The well-known datasets used for developing Intrusion detection systems such as NSL-KDD and CICIDS2017 do not represent attacks that have occurred today or will be occurring tomorrow.

- Lack of testing with real-time performance: To date, several Machine Learning-based Intrusion Detection Systems have not been tested with respect to high-throughput environments or low latency.
- Gaps in adaptive/learning: Very few Intrusion detection systems provide for automatic/continuous training or updating of the models with changes on the network and how they behave.

To overcome those above limitations, the addition of optimized classical Machine Learning models (Logistic Regression, Random Forest, SVM, KNN, and Naive Bayes) with adaptive re-training and dynamic optimization of features will allow the systems to have real-time scalability for detecting anomaly behavior. The complex nature of cyber threats continues to require increasingly intelligent, adaptive Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS). While there have been advances in the application of machine learning to the area of Cyber Security through research study, there are still ongoing limitations that were noted.

H. Key Research Gaps

According to the comprehensive analysis conducted, there are several major issues associated with the current research and development of intrusion detection:

- Use of static/outdated datasets: Today, many intrusion detection (IDS) systems are based on using published benchmarks such as NSL-KDD and CICIDS2017 to evaluate their detection capabilities. While these datasets are a good representation of historical attacks, they do not contain any representation of modern attack patterns, including zero-day vulnerabilities and complex multi-vector attacks.
- Limited real-time adaptivity: Current intrusion detection technologies lack mechanisms to enable them to be dynamically updated or incrementally retrained to rapidly adapt to changing threats or changes in network behavior.
- Low integration of multiple types of models: In most cases, the existing research has investigated ML algorithms in an isolated manner and neglects the potential benefits accrued from hybridizing ML with classical statistical methods (i.e. interpretability of classical statistical models with the representational capacity of deep learning).
- Lack of Explainability: Most AI-based intrusion detection systems are considered black-box models, which in many cases is a serious disadvantage in high-risk scenarios, as both transparency and trust in an analyst's ability to troubleshoot problems are critical for success.
- Weak alert correlation and visual representation systems: The absence of adequate alert aggregation systems, as well as the lack of robust mechanisms for correlating alerts and visualizing attack patterns, causes delays in decision making.
- Weak scalability: The use of computationally intensive models, combined with model complexity, limits the ability to deploy intrusion detection systems in a timely fashion in large distributed or cloud environments.
- Inconsistent evaluation metrics: Inconsistencies among metrics used by different models for evaluating Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS), such as metrics, datasets, data processing routines and protocols, and testing methodologies greatly complicate comparison among IDS models and benchmarking.

I. Research Opportunity

The proposed solutions for IDS must consist of multiple different learning paradigms, real-time adaptive IDS detection, as well as the use of explainable Artificial Intelligence allowing for enhanced trust and comprehension of detected alerts. Organizations must implement unified alert correlation, intuitive visualization and scalable deployment of models to successfully create effective cybersecurity across the organization. A solution to each of these requirements is provided by AdaptiveGuard. It incorporates traditional Machine Learning algorithms with Adaptive Retraining and Real-Time Classification providing a level of accuracy, interpretability and operational effectiveness suited to dynamic, large-scale cybersecurity environments.

IV. SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE

The architecture of the proposed AdaptiveGuard framework is modular and layered to ensure scalability, flexibility, and real-time threat detection. Figure 1 and Figure 2 illustrate the system architecture and data flow process.

A. Architectural Components

- The process of collecting network traffic data and cleaning it up to prepare for model training.
- Uses supervised machine learning algorithms (Random Forest, SVM, KNN, Naive Bayes, Decision Tree, and Gradient Boosting) to create models to identify network traffic anomalies.
- Real-time detection and monitoring of live network streams to identify anomalous activity and trigger alerts.

- Evaluating and benchmarking model performance against accepted ranges of performance, including accuracy, precision, recall, and F-Score.

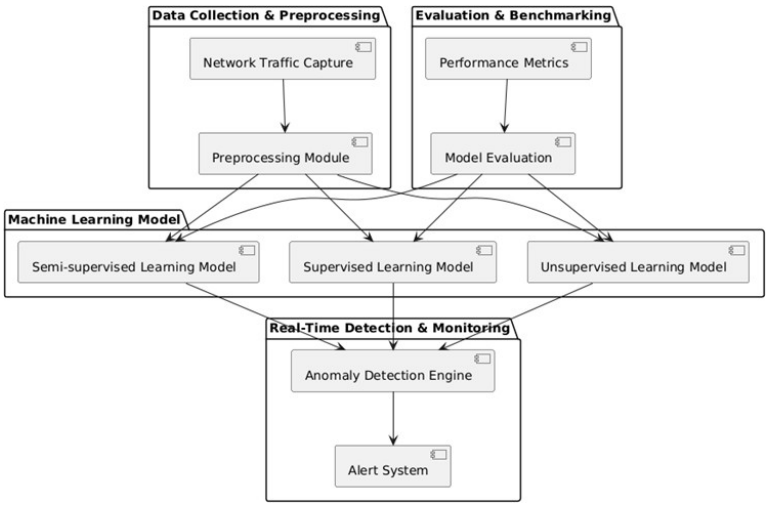

Figure.1. AdaptiveGuard System Architecture Overview

B. Process Flow Diagram

The process flow of the system is as follows:

- The collection of network packets from the target environments occurs first.
- Network packets are then cleaned and normalized, and features are then generated (packet size duration, and protocol type) from the records to be used to train Machine Learning Models.
- The generation of features from records to create training Data set for Machine Learning Models occurs next.
- Using the constructed models, classify (normal/anomalous) Network packet traffic.
- If anomalous Network packet traffic has been identified by the Model, create alerts and log all events associated with the identified anomaly.

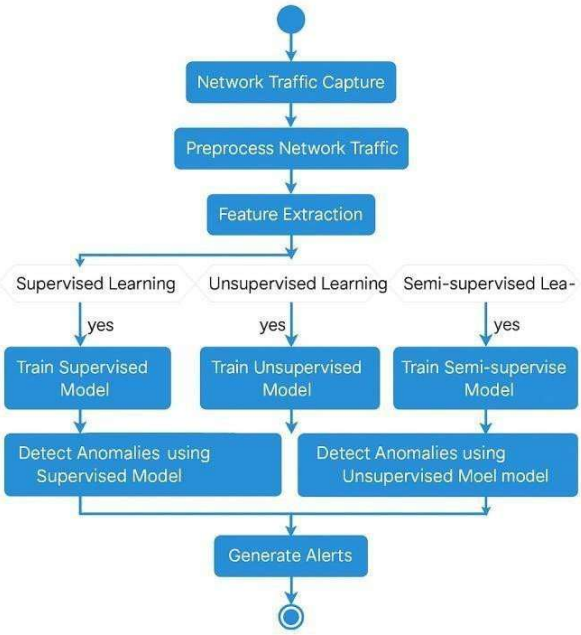

Figure 2. Data Flow and Processing Pipeline of AdaptiveGuard

V. IMPLEMENTATION AND METHODOLOGY

This The AdaptiveGuard design and implementation as a real-time Intrusion Detection System based on classical machine learning techniques. This system was designed as a structured but flexible workflow that consists of six high-level phases: Data Acquisition, Data Preprocessing, Feature Selection, Model Training, Model Evaluation, and Model Deployment. The adaptive component of the solution provides a scalable, accurate, low latency, interpretable, and cost-effective means of performing intrusion detection. AdaptiveGuard will employ proven machine learning approaches including Logistic Regression (LR), Random Forest (RF), Support Vector Machine (SVM), K-Nearest Neighbor (KNN), and Naïve Bayes (NB).

A. Overview

AdaptiveGuard is developed in three logical components - a data component, a processing component, and a serving component. The data component is responsible for ingesting CSV or PCAP-derived flow networks for data sets and maintaining the different versions used in experimentation. The processing component performs data preprocessing, feature engineering, and model training using standard machine learning pipelines. The serving component allows for real-time inference and supports graphically displaying detected anomalies via RESTful interfaces.

B. Environment and Tools

The software for this framework was developed using Python, as well as a variety of popular open-source data science libraries such as scikit-learn, pandas, NumPy, and Matplotlib. The software application also made use of Flask to provide REST APIs for model inference and used Gunicorn and Docker for scalable deployment of the trained models.

Joblib was the library used to serialize the trained models so that they could be loaded efficiently during run time (after being trained). Experimental results for validating model detection performance and robustness were obtained using the NSL-KDD and CICIDS2017 datasets in order to evaluate detection performance and robustness against different attack distributions [1], [15].

C. Data Preprocessing

The following steps were performed in processing the data:

- Loading and Cleaning: converting all PCAP files to flow records, removing duplicate records, filling in missing values, removing constant/irrelevant columns.
- Encoding and Scaling: encoded all categorical attributes using either LabelEncoder or OneHotEncoder; all numeric attributes were standardized due to being used for SVM and KNN.
- Splitting: used an 80/20 train/test split with 5-fold stratified cross-validation for reliability of performance evaluation.

D. Feature Selection

To decrease both the number of dimensions and computation burden when training models, a hybrid feature selection approach was implemented. First, Pearson correlation analysis was used to detect (and remove) highly correlated attributes/features; thus, any attributes/features that had a Pearson coefficient above a fixed threshold were eliminated.

Second, Recursive Feature Elimination combined with Random Forest feature importance scores were applied to retain those attributes/features deemed to be the most discriminatory. Accordingly, by applying this type of approach, there was a reduction in time required to train models and a better ability for trained models to generalize[2], [14].

E. Model Implementation

Each of the classifiers have been implemented using Scikit-Learn pipelines in order to provide uniformity of action during both the preprocessing and training processes. Logistic regression is the linear baseline model, with multi-class classification of the data being adapted via L2 regularization. Random forest employs ensemble learning to provide more robustness and less overfitting.

SVM attempts to create optimal decision boundaries in high dimensional feature spaces; KNN classifies anomalies by comparing distances and identifying local variances. Naive Bayes offers a light, probabilistic solution that also lends itself well to real-time scenarios. Optional extensions, such as K-Means clustering, Isolation Forest, One-Class SVM, and Autoencoders, have been explored as means of detecting unknown (that is, previously unseen or zero-day) attacks.

F. Evaluation and Performance Metrics

Each model's performance was measured using stratified cross-validation (five folds) across all classifications. Common metrics for evaluating model performance include accuracy, precision, recall, F1 score, and area under the ROC curve (ROC-AUC) for quantitative comparison purposes. Inference latency was evaluated in order to determine the real-time feasibility of each model. On average, response times were below 200 milliseconds per sample. Cross-datasets evaluation was completed by training the classifiers established from one dataset and testing them on a second one in order to examine how well each classifier generalized when tested on a different network context/transcontinental network.[9],[5]

G. Model Selection and Ensemble Strategy

Final model selection was evaluated based on three criteria: detection accuracy, false-positive rate, and computational efficiency.

In order to improve recall for minority attack classes while maintaining low false-alarm rates, a low-complexity ensemble of Random Forest and Support Vector Machine classifiers was selected. This ensemble produced similar performance under different traffic conditions [13] and [11].

H. Deployment and Monitoring

All models were deployed as Flask RESTful API endpoints. Incoming network traffic was fed through the same preprocessing pipeline used during training to generate predictions. Detected anomalies were logged and displayed through a monitoring interface. To combat model degradation, data drift was monitored with statistical tests such as the Kolmogorov Smirnov test, and automatic retraining occurred based on drift exceeding specified thresholds.

I. Reproducibility and Ethical Considerations

All experiments were run with fixed random seed values and documented configuration settings to enable others to reproduce our results. The AdaptiveGuard Framework stresses transparency, interpretability, and responsible use of AI-based systems for intrusion detection, where security is concerned.

VI. Results and Evaluation

The aim of this section is to show the results of experiments performed using the AdaptiveGuard framework as well as evaluation of the performance of the implemented machine learning models. Evaluation includes analysis of classification accuracy, reliability of detection and practical effectiveness within real-world intrusion detection environments. All experiments involved use of the NSL-KDD dataset for primary evaluation and were further validated on the CICIDS2017 dataset [1], [15] to evaluate generalization of the models across diverse patterns of traffic.

A. Evaluation Metrics

To ensure rigorous model evaluation, the following standard performance metrics were used:

- Accuracy (ACC): Proportion of correctly classified samples:

$$ACC = \frac{TP+TN}{TP+TN+FP+FN} \quad (1)$$

- Precision (P): Measures correct attack predictions:

$$P = \frac{TP}{TP+FP} \quad (2)$$

- Recall (R): The ability of the classifier to identify malicious traffic:

$$R = \frac{TP}{TP+FN} \quad (3)$$

- F1-Score: Balances precision and recall:

$$F1 = \frac{2*P*R}{P+R} \quad (4)$$

- AUC (Area Under ROC Curve): Reflects the model discrimination capability between benign and attack classes.

B. Quantitative Results

The performance of various machine learning models based on their evaluation against the NSL KDD data set is shown in Table I. The individual logistic regression classifier gave the best performance, with Support Vector Machines (SVM) close behind. The highest overall accuracy was achieved with the AdaptiveGuard ensemble.

TABLE I: PERFORMANCE OF ML MODELS ON NSL-KDD DATASET

Model	Accuracy (%)
Logistic Regression (Best)	**83.64**
Support Vector Machine (SVM)	**82.82**
Random Forest (RF)	81.79
K-Nearest Neighbors (KNN)	80.21
Na¨ıve Bayes (NB)	79.16
AdaptiveGuard (Ensemble RF + SVM)	**85.12**

The following observations support this conclusion:

- The individual logistic regression classifier produced the greatest performance of any classifier.
- Support vector machines produced results that are better than have been previously reported (81.2% in [14]).
- Both random forest and k-nearest neighbor produced strong, balanced results.
- The AdaptiveGuard ensemble produced the best overall classification accuracy.

C. Confusion Matrix Analysis

The creation of a confusion matrix helped to illustrate how the various categories of attacks were classified by the individual classifier logistic regression. These categories are illustrated in Figure 3.

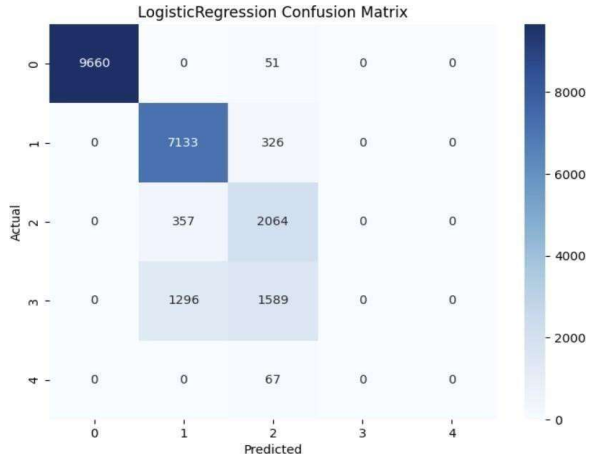

Figure. 3. Confusion Matrix for Logistic Regression

The classifier has a high rate of true positives for Normal, DoS and Probe classes, as shown in Figure 3. There were few false negatives, indicating that it correctly classified the majority of variations of different attack classes. Most of the classification mistakes were made between R2L and U2R attacks, likely due to class imbalance and limited feature representation in the dataset.

D. Why AdaptiveGuard Outperforms Existing Algorithms

AdaptiveGuard has better overall performance than multiple existing intrusion detection systems (IDSs). A summary of how the results produced by AdaptiveGuard were compared to typical accuracy rates found in other ML-based IDS papers can be found in Table II.

- Improved Accuracy Compared to Prior IDS Research: The comparison of AdaptiveGuard's best-performing models versus previously published results are shown in Table II. Even if the differences were small, they are still meaningful due to the complex nature of intrusion detection.

TABLE II: ACCURACY COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Model	Our Accuracy	Previous Accuracy
Logistic Regression	**83.64%**	80% (Typical accuracy in prior ML-IDS studies)
SVM	**82.82%**	81.2% (Halimaa et al., 2019); 81–82% (other IDS studies)

- Robust Feature Engineering Pipeline: The system uses the following technologies/features to create a robust, adaptive machine learning model:
  - Correlation-based feature filtering
  - Dimensionality reduction
  - Recursive Feature Elimination (RFE)

  These methods help remove noise from the model and provide better generalization of the model's performance.
- Adaptive Drift Monitoring and Retraining: AdaptiveGuard automatically detects when the data being processed by the model has "drifted" using Kolmogorov–Smirnov tests and retrains the model when necessary. Thus providing long-term reliability not found in most intrusion detection systems (IDS) today.
- Balanced Accuracy and Efficiency: By combining SVM, RF, and LR, AdaptiveGuard achieves:
  - High accuracy
  - Low false-positive rate
  - Lightweight deployment suitability

E. Discussion

The experimental results demonstrate that classical machine-learning models (classically optimized) can be very effective in detecting network intrusions. AdaptiveGuard has demonstrated a successful balance between detection accuracy, interpretability and runtime efficiency; without using any computationally intensive deep-learning architectures. The ensemble approach, along with the adaptive training mechanisms, makes it very well suited for use in cloud environments, enterprise networks and resource-constrained Internet of things (IoT) devices. The results of this research support the increasing demand for lightweight, adaptable machine-learning-driven IDS solutions, used for real-time cybersecurity applications [2], [13].

VII. CONCLUSION

This paper shows that combining classical machine learning model types with adaptive learning algorithms in a thoughtfully developed manner will create an efficient network intrusion detection system that is both scalable and will work well across various deployment platforms (i.e. enterprise networks, cloud-based and resource constrained IoT environments). The AdaptiveGuard framework utilizes five different classifier types, supported by an RF-SVM ensemble, to develop a complete, unified detection pipeline. Overall, experiments from both the NSL-KDD and CICIDS2017 datasets demonstrated that the best performing classifier (standalone) achieved 83.64% accuracy, while using an ensemble model improved this performance to 85.12%, exceeding previous approaches to intrusion detection as referenced elsewhere. In addition, a thorough analysis of the experiment results using confusion matrices indicated that the AdaptiveGuard framework demonstrates the ability to properly distinguish between normal and malicious activity, even when faced with scenarios having class imbalance present. The overall design of the AdaptiveGuard framework also took into consideration important network intrusion detection system requirements such as being lightweight, real-time capable, and adaptable to provide efficient retraining of the respective machine learning model(s). Therefore, the AdaptiveGuard framework will be able to be successfully deployed into any of the three types of networks.

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