Advances in Science and Education, 2025, 19–22

doi: 10.70728/edu.v01.i05.007
Volume 01, Issue 05
ISSN: 3060-5415
Paper

PAPER

THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ENSURING CYBERSECURITY IN COMPUTER NETWORKS

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Abstract

The expansion of digital infrastructure and the growing sophistication of cyberattacks expose limitations of traditional security controls. This paper examines AI-based anomaly detection using the CICIDS2017 dataset as a case study. Data preprocessing, feature selection, and application of Random Forest, SVM and Deep Neural Network models are described. Results synthesized from reproductions and benchmark studies indicate that AI approaches significantly improve detection accuracy and response time, while challenges remain in dataset quality, class imbalance and adversarial robustness .

Key words: artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, anomaly detection, CICIDS2017, Random Forest, deep neural network.

INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation and global network integration have made cybersecurity a strategic priority for states, businesses, and societies. In recent years, global economic losses from cybercrime have reached trillions of dollars, with ransomware, data exfiltration, and denial-of-service (DoS/DDoS) attacks dominating the threat landscape.

The European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) in its Threat Landscape 2024 report highlighted availability threats, ransomware, and data-related breaches as the most pressing challenges . Uzbekistan is also taking steps toward strengthening digital infrastructure and adopting artificial intelligence (AI) technologies as outlined in national strategies such as “AI 2030”, which promotes the integration of AI-based systems in governance and critical industries. At the same time, traditional IDS/IPS and antivirus solutions have demonstrated limitations in detecting zero-day exploits, polymorphic malware, and AI-driven advanced persistent threats (APTs). In this context, the present paper analyzes a concrete case study: anomaly-based intrusion detection using the CICIDS2017 dataset. The objectives are: To describe the dataset and its preprocessing pipeline; To examine AI algorithms (Random Forest, SVM, Deep Neural Networks) applied in the literature; To synthesize reported results and limitations; To discuss real-world deployment challenges and propose recommendations. This approach is based on scientific literature, benchmarking studies, and official CIC dataset documentation .

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

Ensuring the integrity of the data always requires technologies that can be detected in time and resist modifications. Hash functions can be used to determine the state of change or distortion of information. It is a priority in the storage and transmission of information and is of particular importance, especially for financial and personal information. Multi-layer protection systems are organized in the networks. In these systems, data is encrypted in multiple stages, creating additional layers of security using different algorithms. This approach helps to make the network ineffective against various attacks developed by hackers and malicious software. These methods also further improve the information security of network users.[1]

In modern networks, security protocols occupy an important place. For example, the HTTPS protocol used in internet networks prevents data from being stolen and corrupted by encryption.

Compiled on: September 16, 2025.

VPN services, on the other hand, make the connection of users to the network confidential and secure. Such protocols reliably support the information exchange process and serve to protect privacy. The growth and complication of information threats in the network environment requires new cryptographic approaches.[2]

Case Study Selection: Why CICIDS2017? — CICIDS2017 — provided by the Canadian Institute for Cybersecurity (UNB) — is one of the most widely used intrusion detection datasets. It includes real traffic scenarios and diverse attack types, making it a strong benchmark for anomaly detection and attack classification [1][2]. Technical Features of CICIDS2017: Records: ≈2.8 million labeled rows (figures vary across sources) [2]. Features: 70–80 extracted attributes (packet counts, byte rates, protocols, average packet size, inter-arrival time, etc.) [1][2]. Labels: Both normal and multiple attack categories (DoS/DDoS, brute force, botnet, XSS, SQLi, port scans, and others), suitable for supervised learning [1][2]. Formats: CSV and pcap; pre-processed CSV files are widely used for ML tasks [2].

RESULTS

The experimental evaluation of AI-driven intrusion detection systems (IDS) on the CICIDS2017 dataset demonstrates clear performance differences among the tested models. The dataset's comprehensive nature—covering DoS, DDoS, infiltration, botnet, and brute force attacks—makes it a robust benchmark for assessing detection capabilities under realistic conditions [7]. Random Forest (RF) consistently achieves above 98% accuracy, even with minimal preprocessing, confirming its robustness to noisy features and relatively low computational demand [8]. This makes RF especially effective for real-time applications in resource-limited environments, although its ability to detect zero-day attacks remains limited due to dependency on labeled training data.

Support Vector Machines (SVMs) equipped with RBF kernels demonstrate strong precision (>97%), but training times become prohibitive when applied to large-scale datasets such as CICIDS2017 [8]. Thus, SVMs remain more suitable for small-scale deployments or feature-reduced datasets, where computational efficiency is less of a constraint.

Deep Neural Networks (DNNs) outperform all other approaches, reporting >99% accuracy and the lowest false positive rate (≈0.5%) [9]. Their ability to model complex, non-linear attack patterns makes them ideal for sophisticated threats, including infiltration and botnet activity.

However, their heavy reliance on GPU/TPU infrastructure and vulnerability to adversarial perturbations present critical deployment challenges [12]. Hybrid and Ensemble Models—such as RF+DNN combinations or dimensionality reduction with PCA prior to classification—demonstrate balanced accuracy (97–98%) and improved scalability [10][14]. While slightly less accurate than DNNs, these models offer adaptability across diverse network environments, including those with fluctuating traffic patterns **(Table 1)**.

The comparative evaluation of AI models on the CICIDS2017 dataset reveals that Deep Neural Networks consistently deliver the highest accuracy and lowest false positive rates, though at the cost of heavy computational requirements. Random Forest emerges as the most practical lightweight option for real-time, resource-constrained deployments, while hybrid and ensemble approaches provide a balanced compromise between accuracy and efficiency, making them adaptable to diverse network environments. Across all models, accuracy remains high (96–99%); however, in operational contexts such as Security Operations Centers, the priority shifts toward maintaining a low false positive rate, as excessive alerts directly undermine analyst effectiveness [9][12].

DISCUSSIONS

The CICIDS2017 case study provides several valuable insights into the application of AI in network cybersecurity. Feature selection and class balancing are consistently shown to improve detection performance across models, while hybrid approaches such as combining Random Forest and Deep Neural Networks deliver effective trade-offs between accuracy and computational efficiency [8][14]. Despite these advantages, significant weaknesses remain: models degrade over time due to concept drift, and adversarial traffic can still evade detection systems by exploiting vulnerabilities in learned decision boundaries [12][13]. In the context of Uzbekistan, several challenges become apparent. First, many organizations face resource constraints, lacking access to GPU-based infrastructures required for running large-scale DNNs. In such cases, lightweight solutions such as RF or optimized ensembles are more suitable for real-time deployment [4][8]. Second, data availability is a persistent limitation, as national organizations rarely share traffic logs due to privacy and regulatory concerns. Transfer learning using global datasets such as CICIDS2017 provides a feasible solution to mitigate this gap [6]. Third, as Uzbekistan seeks to align with international standards of cybersecurity regulation, model interpretability and governance gain importance to ensure compliance and organizational trust [3][6]. Moving forward, several technical strategies are recommended. The adoption of explainable AI tools such as SHAP and LIME can improve trust by providing analysts with clear reasons behind alerts, thereby reducing false positives [12]. Hybrid architectures that combine lightweight edge-level RF classifiers with cloud-based DNNs offer scalability and depth, suitable for environments where computational resources are unevenly distributed [8][14]. To counter adversarial evasion, adversarial training should be applied to improve resilience against evolving attack strategies [12][13]. Finally, continuous retraining pipelines leveraging feedback from Security Operations Centers (SOCs) are crucial to maintaining model adaptability against rapidly changing threats [6].

Overall, integrating AI into network cybersecurity requires balancing accuracy, efficiency, interpretability, and robustness. By addressing these dimensions simultaneously, AI-driven IDS can evolve into practical and effective systems, not only in advanced infrastructures but also in resource-constrained environments such as Uzbekistan **(Table 2)**.

CONCLUSION

The study of AI-driven intrusion detection systems on the CICIDS2017 dataset confirms that artificial intelligence plays a decisive role in advancing network cybersecurity. Across multiple models, consistent performance improvements were observed compared to traditional rule-based IDS, with detection accuracy ranging from 96% to 99.6%. Deep Neural Networks (DNNs) demonstrated the highest accuracy (>99%) and lowest false positive rate (0.5%), establishing themselves as the most powerful solution for detecting complex intrusions such as botnets and infiltration [9][12].

However, their reliance on high-performance computing infrastructure and vulnerability to adversarial attacks limit their universal deployment. Random Forest (RF) proved to be a lightweight yet reliable baseline, achieving over 98% accuracy with minimal resource requirements [8]. This makes RF particularly suitable for real-time environments in resource-constrained regions, including Uzbekistan, where access to GPUs and high-performance clusters is limited. Hybrid and Ensemble Models emerged as a balanced solution, providing adaptability across diverse traffic scenarios and sustaining strong precision and recall while consuming fewer computational resources than

Model Type	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	FPR	Strengths	Weaknesses
Random Forest (RF)	>98%	~97%	~97%	~1.2%	Robust, low computational cost, real-time feasible	Poor at generalizing to zero-day attacks
SVM (RBF Kernel)	~97%	>97%	~96%	~1.5%	Strong precision on reduced datasets	High training time, not scalable
Deep Neural Networks (DNNs)	>99%	>98%	>98%	~0.5%	Best accuracy, captures non-linear patterns	Needs GPU/TPU, vulnerable to adversarial
Hybrid / Ensembles	96–98%	97–98%	97%	~0.8–1%	Balanced accuracy, adaptable across traffic types	Slightly lower accuracy than DNN

Table 1. Comparative Performance of AI Models on CICIDS2017

Aspect	Strengths	Weaknesses
Model Design	Feature selection & class balancing improve accuracy	Models degrade over time due to **concept drift**
Detection Capability	Hybrid models (RF+DNN) balance speed and accuracy	Vulnerable to **adversarial traffic**
Practical Deployment	RF is lightweight and resource-friendly	DNN requires **high computational power (GPU/TPU)**
Local Context	Transfer learning from CICIDS2017 mitigates lack of local datasets	National data-sharing practices are limited
Governance	Explainable AI tools (SHAP/LIME) reduce false positives and improve trust	Lack of interpretability may hinder regulatory compliance
Sustainability	SOC-driven retraining pipelines maintain adaptability	Without retraining, performance declines against **new attacks**

Table 2. Strengths and Weaknesses of AI-based IDS in Network Security

DNNs [10][14]. The results highlight several critical insights for both global and regional contexts: Concept drift remains a challenge, as model accuracy degrades over time without retraining [13]. Dataset imbalance must be addressed through feature engineering and resampling to prevent bias in detection [7]. False positive reduction is more valuable in practice than marginal improvements in accuracy, especially for Security Operations Centers (SOCs), where analyst fatigue is a major operational risk [12]. For developing environments such as Uzbekistan, scalable hybrid solutions that combine RF at the edge with DNN in the cloud represent the most realistic deployment pathway [4][8]. In conclusion, AI-driven cybersecurity is not a universal one-size-fits-all solution. Instead, success depends on a careful balance between accuracy, efficiency, interpretability, and resilience. Future research should focus on adversarial robustness, continuous retraining pipelines, and localized dataset development to strengthen both global and national cyber defense ecosystems.

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