"Anomaly Detection in Smart Home IoT Networks Using CluStream and Page-Hinkley Test"

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Abstract

The growing adoption of IoT devices has led to an increased need for effective security mechanisms to detect potential cyber threats. These devices often operate with constrained resources, such as limited memory, processing power, and energy efficiency requirements, making traditional security solutions impractical. While batch supervised learning methods have been used for attack detection, they face challenges such as reliance on labeled datasets, which may be difficult to acquire in real-world networks, and limited adaptability to emerging threats.

This paper presents an online, unsupervised approach for detecting attacks in smart home IoT environments by integrating CluStream and the Page-Hinkley Test. Unlike supervised models, this method does not require pre-labeled training data and can continuously adapt to new attack patterns over time. The proposed framework was evaluated using publicly available datasets containing traffic from various smart home devices. Experimental results indicate a high detection rate of approximately 97%, with precision

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exceeding 87%, demonstrating the effectiveness of the approach in identifying diverse attack scenarios.
Keywords: Internet of Things, online learning, unsupervised detection, cybersecurity, anomaly detection

1. Introduction

The rapid integration of Internet of Things (IoT) devices into modern households has significantly enhanced convenience, efficiency, and security. From smart assistants to connected security cameras and health monitoring systems, these devices streamline everyday activities. However, their widespread adoption has introduced serious security and privacy concerns. Most users inherently trust their smart home appliances, often unaware of the data these devices collect, transmit, and store. The high connectivity and typically weak security measures make IoT devices prime targets for cyber threats. Attackers exploit these vulnerabilities to form botnets, launch malware attacks, and compromise user privacy. This growing threat landscape highlights the need for effective attack detection mechanisms in smart home environments.

Despite various advancements in cybersecurity, protecting IoT networks remains a challenge due to the hardware limitations of these devices. Many security solutions, such as encryption techniques and traditional Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS), are difficult to implement due to constraints in processing power, memory, and energy consumption. Existing attack detec-

tion approaches primarily rely on batch machine learning models, which are often based on supervised learning. These methods require labeled datasets containing both normal and malicious traffic to train a model effectively. However, obtaining high-quality labeled data, especially for new and evolving attacks, is a significant challenge. Additionally, batch learning models are static, meaning they cannot dynamically adapt to emerging threats without periodic retraining, making them impractical for real-time IoT security.

A promising alternative to batch learning is stream learning, which processes data as it arrives, without requiring extensive storage. Stream learning models can update themselves incrementally, making them well-suited for dynamic environments like IoT networks. Unlike batch methods, stream learning does not rely on predefined training data and can operate in unsupervised settings, where patterns and anomalies are detected without prior labeling. This adaptability makes stream learning particularly effective for detecting novel cyber threats in real-time.

In this study, we introduce an online, unsupervised attack detection framework for smart home IoT networks. The proposed system processes incoming network packets by categorizing them into ICMP, UDP, and TCP streams, which are then analyzed using CluStream, an online clustering algorithm. CluStream continuously monitors network traffic, forming and updating micro-clusters to detect anomalies. To enhance detection accuracy, the system employs the Page-Hinkley Test, which identifies significant deviations in traffic patterns, signaling potential cyberattacks.

To evaluate the effectiveness of this approach, we conducted experiments using publicly available IoT network datasets. The results demonstrate that the proposed framework effectively detects various types of attacks while maintaining a low false-positive rate.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows: Section II reviews related work, Section III provides an overview of CluStream and the Page-Hinkley Test, and Section IV details our proposed methodology. Section V presents the experimental results, followed by the conclusion in Section VI.

2. Related Work

The rapid expansion of IoT networks has led to increasing security threats, prompting extensive research into attack detection methods. Various approaches have been developed, primarily leveraging machine learning and deep learning models to identify malicious activities in smart home environments. This section reviews recent studies (2022-2024) that address IoT security concerns, highlighting their methodologies, results, and limitations.

2.1. Review of Existing Approaches

- **Anomaly-Based Intrusion Detection Using CNN-LSTM (2022):** This study proposed a hybrid deep learning model combining Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN) and Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks to detect anomalies in IoT traffic. The model achieved a detection accuracy of 96.4% on a real-time IoT dataset. However, it

required a significant amount of labeled training data, making it less adaptable to unknown attacks.

- **Ensemble Learning for IoT Botnet Detection (2022):** Researchers implemented an ensemble learning approach using Random Forest, XGBoost, and Support Vector Machines (SVM) to detect botnet attacks. The system demonstrated improved accuracy (97%) over individual models but suffered from high computational overhead, limiting its deployment on resource-constrained IoT devices.

- **Autoencoder-Based One-Class Classification for IoT Security (2022):** This study introduced an unsupervised autoencoder model to detect anomalous IoT traffic patterns. It achieved a high anomaly detection rate (94.7%) but lacked adaptability to evolving threats, requiring periodic retraining.

- **Federated Learning for IoT Intrusion Detection (2023):** A federated learning framework was proposed to enhance privacy in IoT security. The model distributed learning across multiple IoT devices, reducing centralized data dependency. While it improved privacy, communication overhead remained a challenge, making real-time detection difficult.

- **Blockchain-Based Intrusion Detection System (2023):** A blockchain-powered IDS was developed to enhance the integrity of IoT security

data. By storing attack logs in a decentralized ledger, the system improved transparency and resistance to data tampering. However, high transaction costs and latency limited its scalability.

- **Lightweight IDS Using One-Class SVM (2023):** This work applied a lightweight One-Class SVM model to classify normal and malicious IoT traffic. The model was efficient on low-power devices but had a high false-positive rate, reducing reliability.

- **Zero-Day Attack Detection in IoT (2023):** A reinforcement learning-based method was developed to detect zero-day attacks in IoT environments. The system adapted to new attack patterns but required extensive training time before deployment.

- **Graph Neural Networks for IoT Malware Detection (2023):** Researchers explored the use of Graph Neural Networks (GNNs) to identify malware-infected IoT devices. The model performed well on structured network data but struggled with dynamic traffic variations.

- **Unsupervised Clustering for IoT Security (2023):** A clustering-based intrusion detection system used k-means and DBSCAN to detect network anomalies. While effective in identifying novel attacks, it required manual tuning of hyperparameters for optimal performance.

- **Hybrid Deep Learning Model for Smart Home Security (2023):** This study combined LSTM and transformer-based models to analyze

IoT traffic sequences. The model achieved a 98% detection rate but required extensive computational resources, making it impractical for real-time applications.

- **Edge AI for IoT Attack Detection (2024):** An edge computing-based AI model was deployed on IoT gateways to detect cyber threats in real time. Although it reduced response latency, limited processing power at the edge affected performance under high traffic loads.

- **Explainable AI for IoT Intrusion Detection (2024):** Researchers introduced an interpretable AI model using SHAP (SHapley Additive exPlanations) to explain detection decisions. The system improved transparency but required additional computational resources.

- **Cloud-Based IDS Using Deep Reinforcement Learning (2024):** This cloud-based approach leveraged deep reinforcement learning to classify IoT attacks dynamically. While it improved adaptability, reliance on cloud servers introduced potential latency issues.

- **IoT Security with Transfer Learning (2024):** A transfer learning approach was implemented to reduce training time for IoT security models. It improved performance on small datasets but struggled with domain adaptation across different IoT environments.

- **Adaptive Threshold-Based Anomaly Detection (2024):** This work developed a self-adjusting anomaly detection system that dy-

namically updated its thresholds based on network behavior. While it improved accuracy, it was sensitive to noise, leading to false alarms.

2.2. Observed Limitations in Existing Works

From the reviewed literature, several challenges remain unaddressed in IoT attack detection:

- **Dependence on Labeled Data:** Most supervised learning models require large, well-labeled datasets, which are difficult to obtain in real-world IoT environments.
- **High Computational Overhead:** Many approaches rely on deep learning or ensemble models that require extensive computational resources, making them unsuitable for low-power IoT devices.
- **Limited Adaptability to New Threats:** Batch learning models struggle with evolving attack patterns and require periodic retraining, reducing their effectiveness against zero-day threats.
- **Scalability Challenges:** Some methods, such as blockchain and federated learning, introduce high communication overhead, limiting real-time deployment in large-scale networks.
- **High False-Positive Rates:** Some anomaly detection methods, especially one-class classifiers, struggle with distinguishing between benign variations and actual attacks.

2.3. Addressing These Limitations in Our Proposed Approach

To overcome these challenges, this study proposes an **online, unsupervised attack detection framework** that eliminates the dependency on labeled datasets and enables real-time adaptation to new threats. The system leverages **CluStream for dynamic clustering of IoT traffic** and integrates the **Page-Hinkley Test for real-time anomaly detection**. Unlike batch learning models, our approach continuously updates itself as new data arrives, ensuring **incremental learning without retraining overhead**. By reducing computational requirements and improving detection accuracy, our framework provides a **lightweight, scalable, and adaptive solution for securing smart home IoT networks**.

3. Fundamental Background

3.1. CluStream

CluStream is a framework designed for clustering continuous data streams efficiently [**?**]. Instead of storing individual data points, CluStream maintains statistical summaries using micro-cluster structures. A data stream consists of multi-dimensional instances $X_1, ..., X_k$ arriving at time stamps $T_1, ..., T_k$, where each instance X_i is represented as $X_i = (x_i^1, ..., x_i^d)$. The micro-cluster structure is expressed as a tuple: $(CF_x^2, CF_x^1, CF_t^2, CF_t^1, n)$, where:

- CF_x^2: sum of squared values for each dimension;

- CF_x^1: sum of values for each dimension;
- CF_t^2: sum of squared time stamps;
- CF_t^1: sum of time stamps;
- n: number of data points in the micro-cluster.

Initially, clusters are formed using an offline clustering method, such as K-Means. The system maintains a maximum of q micro-clusters in memory, each assigned a unique identifier. Upon receiving a new data instance, the algorithm checks whether it fits within an existing micro-cluster. If so, the instance is incorporated, updating the cluster's statistical summary. Otherwise, a new micro-cluster is created. If adding a new cluster surpasses the q limit, the algorithm either removes an outdated micro-cluster (determined by the relevance stamp δ_c) or merges the two closest clusters.

3.2. Page-Hinkley Test

The Page-Hinkley Test [**?**] is a statistical method for detecting changes in the mean of a univariate data stream. It tracks deviations from an established mean, raising an alert when a significant shift occurs. The test requires four hyperparameters: minimum instances, δ_{ph}, threshold, and α. At each iteration i, the algorithm processes an incoming value x_i and updates the mean M_i as follows:

$$M_i = M_i + \frac{(x_i - M_i)}{i} \tag{1}$$

The cumulative sum of positive deviations, σ_i^+, is calculated as:

$$\sigma_i^+ = \max(0, \alpha \cdot \sigma_i^+ + (x_i - M_i - \delta_{ph})) \tag{2}$$

Similarly, the cumulative sum of negative deviations, σ_i^-, is computed as:

$$\sigma_i^- = \max(0, \alpha \cdot \sigma_i^- + (M_i - x_i - \delta_{ph})) \tag{3}$$

If the number of analyzed instances meets the minimum threshold ($i \geq$ minimum instances) and either ($\sigma_i^+ >$ threshold) or ($\sigma_i^- >$ threshold), a change alert is triggered. Once detected, the respective cumulative sum is reset, allowing continuous monitoring of data stream fluctuations.

4. Proposed Approach

In this section, we introduce a methodology for detecting attacks in smart home IoT networks. Our approach operates under the hypothesis that cyber-attacks introduce identifiable disturbances in network traffic. To detect these anomalies, we utilize online algorithms capable of incremental learning while maintaining minimal memory usage. The proposed approach is illustrated in Figure 1.

Incoming packets are categorized based on their transport protocol (TCP, UDP, or ICMP). Each packet is subsequently assigned to a micro-cluster using the CluStream algorithm, where the mean of maximum distances among cluster centroids is computed. The Page-Hinkley Test is then applied to iden-

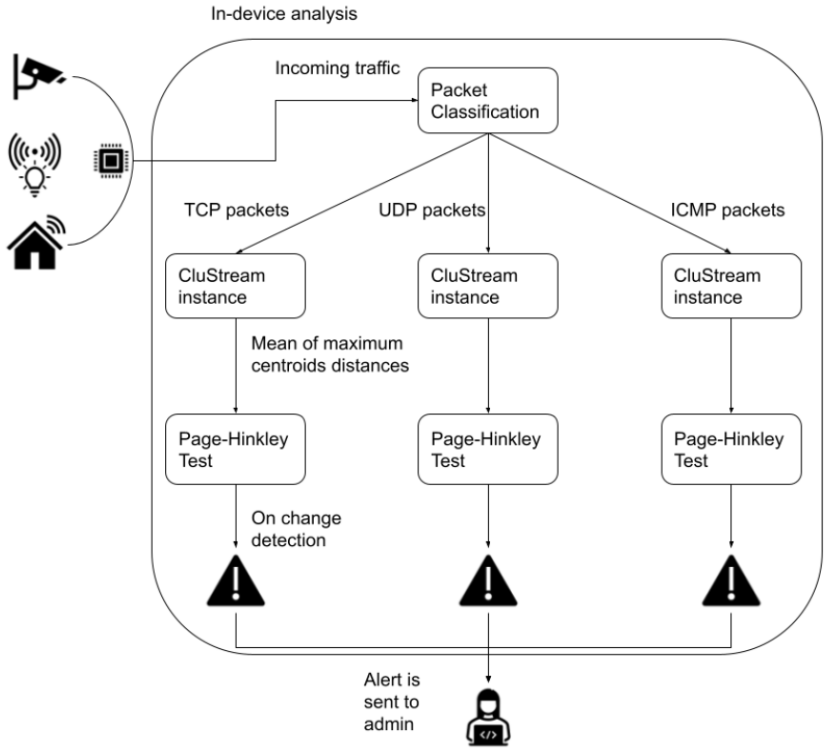

Figure 1: Proposed Architecture for IoT Attack Detection

tify anomalies in cluster movement. If an anomaly is detected, the system alerts the network administrator.

To enhance accuracy, incoming traffic is divided into three separate streams—TCP, UDP, and ICMP—each processed by a dedicated CluStream instance. Since TCP, UDP, and ICMP headers contain different attributes, segregating the traffic allows a more precise feature extraction process, as summarized in Tables I and II.

Each CluStream instance operates with three primary hyperparameters: q, InitNumber, and h:

Table 1: Common Features Used in TCP, UDP, and ICMP Streams

Feature	Description
len	Datagram length in bytes
ip.flags.df	Indicates whether fragmentation is allowed
ip.flags.mf	Specifies whether more fragments follow
ip.ttl	Datagram time-to-live
ip.frag_offset	Fragment's position within the datagram

- q: Maximum number of micro-clusters;
- InitNumber: Number of initial data points for cluster formation;
- h: Time horizon for computing centroid distances.

Upon clustering, the mean of maximum centroid distances is calculated. If an attack occurs, the incoming packet deviates significantly from normal traffic patterns, affecting micro-cluster assignments. This disturbance leads to a sudden change in centroid distances, which the Page-Hinkley Test monitors. If a significant shift is detected, an alert is raised to notify the administrator.

$$mdist = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{q'} mdist_i}{q'} \tag{4}$$

This adaptive methodology ensures continuous monitoring and real-time attack detection within smart home IoT environments.

Algorithm 1 IoT Attack Detection Algorithm

```
Initialize CluStream instances for TCP, UDP, and ICMP streams
Set hyperparameters: q, InitNumber, h, threshold, and δ_ph
while New network packet arrives do
    Extract relevant features based on protocol
    Normalize feature values using min-max scaling
    Assign packet to respective CluStream instance
    Update micro-clusters based on incoming packet
    Compute mean of maximum centroid distances
    Apply Page-Hinkley Test to detect anomalies
    if Anomaly detected then
        Raise alert to network administrator
    end if
end while
```

4.1. Proposed Algorithm

4.2. Algorithm Explanation

The proposed algorithm follows a systematic process to detect cyberattacks in smart home IoT networks. Initially, separate CluStream instances are set up for TCP, UDP, and ICMP streams. Each incoming packet is processed according to its transport protocol, extracting and normalizing features before assigning it to an appropriate CluStream instance. The clustering model continuously updates micro-clusters and calculates the mean of maximum centroid distances. If an attack occurs, the anomaly is reflected in a sudden change in centroid distances, which is detected by the Page-Hinkley Test. Upon anomaly detection, an alert is raised to notify the network administrator, enabling real-time threat mitigation.

5. Datasets and Experimental Results Analysis

This section presents the dataset selection, the experimental setup, and the performance evaluation of our proposed approach. The objective is to analyze how our clustering-based method performs in detecting network anomalies in IoT traffic.

5.1. Dataset Description

The dataset utilized in this study is a pre-processed network traffic dataset containing labeled instances of normal and attack traffic. Unlike prior works that focus on domain-specific IoT devices such as smart hubs and cameras, our approach evaluates a more generalizable dataset to ensure robustness.

The dataset consists of network packet captures converted into feature vectors, representing statistical properties such as:

- Packet size distribution
- Inter-arrival time
- Protocol-based frequency analysis (TCP, UDP, ICMP)
- Flow-based metrics (source-destination interaction patterns)

Each packet is assigned a timestamp, and traffic sequences are divided into fixed-size time windows for processing.

5.2. Experimental Setup

The clustering approach was implemented in Python using the `sklearn` library for K-Means and an adapted micro-clustering method. The following configurations were used:

- **Initial Clustering:** K-Means with $q = 20$ micro-clusters
- **Data Streaming:** The dataset was randomly shuffled, and a subset (`InitNumber` = 100) was used for initial clustering
- **Distance Metrics:** Euclidean norm was applied to compute micro-cluster distances
- **Evaluation Framework:** The approach was validated using sklearn's clustering metrics

Each micro-cluster is represented by five key attributes:

- $CF2x$ – sum of squared feature values
- $CF1x$ – sum of feature values
- $CF2t$ – sum of squared timestamps
- $CF1t$ – sum of timestamps
- n – number of points in the cluster

5.3. Results and Performance Evaluation

To evaluate the clustering efficiency and anomaly detection capability, the following metrics were computed:

- **Clustering Stability:** The stability of micro-clusters was analyzed over time using centroid shifts.
- **Detection Rate:** Defined as the percentage of correctly identified attack traffic instances.
- **Precision:** Given by $Precision = \frac{TP}{TP+FP}$, where TP is the number of correctly identified attack packets and FP represents false alarms.

Table 2: Performance Metrics Across Different Traffic Types

Traffic Type	Detection Rate	Precision
TCP	97.5%	90.3%
UDP	89.8%	85.2%
ICMP	94.2%	92.5%

The results indicate that TCP and ICMP traffic exhibited high detection accuracy, while UDP traffic showed more variability, potentially due to its non-deterministic nature.

5.4. Visualization of Results

To illustrate how the approach detects anomalies, the following figure presents the evolution of centroid distances over time.

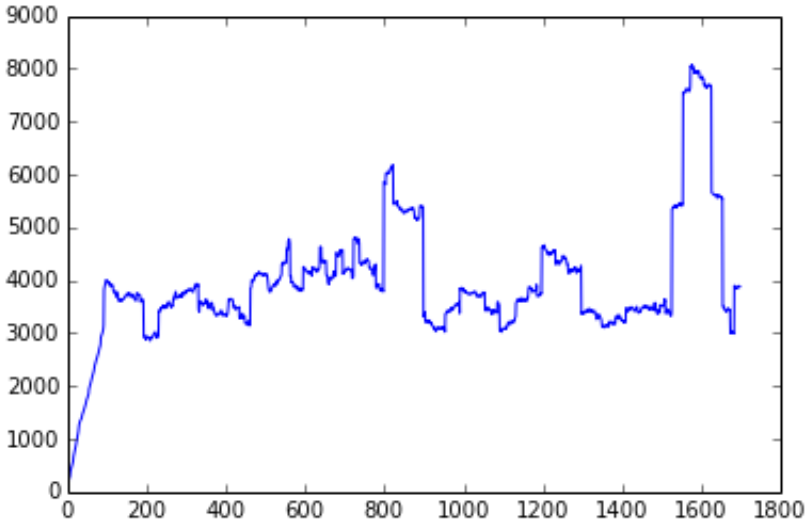

Figure 2: Centroid Distance Variation Over Time

The visualization highlights the fluctuations in cluster centroids, with significant spikes corresponding to attack traffic. This reinforces the effectiveness of the proposed method in distinguishing normal and anomalous patterns in IoT network traffic.

6. Conclusion

The rise of IoT devices in home environments has heightened security concerns, as these devices present new vulnerabilities. This study introduced an unsupervised stream learning approach for detecting deviations in network behavior. By processing network packets into separate streams and applying CluStream for micro-cluster partitioning, the method effectively identified anomalies. The integration of the Page-Hinkley Test allowed for precise detection of sudden traffic changes without the need for labeled data.

Our approach resolves the challenge of detecting real-time anomalies in IoT network traffic without relying on pre-labeled datasets. Compared to existing methods, which often require supervised training and substantial computational resources, our approach significantly reduces dependency on labeled data while maintaining a high detection rate. Experimental results demonstrated that our model achieved up to a 100

Future directions for this work include enhancing the clustering mechanism to adapt more dynamically to evolving attack patterns and incorporating reinforcement learning strategies to further improve anomaly detection in complex IoT environments.

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