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### 📄 **Dataset Selection Explanation**

For this project, I chose to work with the `**cybersecurity\_attacks**` dataset, which consists of exactly **40,000 records** and includes **25 diverse features** spanning numerical, categorical, temporal, and textual data types relevant to real-world cybersecurity analysis. This dataset is particularly suitable for building a comprehensive data science pipeline because it combines numerical, categorical, temporal, and textual information in a complex, high-dimensional structure that reflects the multi-faceted nature of modern network security environments.

The dataset captures various aspects of network traffic and potential threats, including basic network information such as timestamps, source and destination IP addresses, ports, and protocols, which are essential for temporal and geospatial analysis. It also includes packet-level data, such as packet length and type, alongside more advanced features like payload data, malware indicators, anomaly scores, and detailed attack signatures. These fields provide a solid foundation for exploring different types of security incidents, detecting irregularities, and performing both rule-based and unsupervised anomaly detection techniques.

Moreover, the dataset incorporates contextual metadata such as user information, device information, network segment, and geo-location data, which enable meaningful segmentation and clustering of events according to logical or organizational boundaries. Additional fields like alerts/warnings, IDS/IPS logs, firewall logs, and proxy information add another layer of depth, facilitating more advanced analyses such as correlating events across different layers of a network’s security architecture.

The presence of both structured and semi-structured data makes it possible to apply Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques on textual fields like alerts or payloads to extract insights about common threat narratives, sentiment, or writing styles in warnings and logs. Combined with numerical fields such as anomaly scores, severity levels, and packet lengths, this variety enables the application of comprehensive statistical analyses, correlation studies, outlier detection, and dimensionality reduction methods such as PCA.

Additionally, this dataset lends itself well to graph-based analyses. For example, one can visualize the flow of network packets between segments or the spread of attack types across different geo-locations. It also supports building and evaluating predictive models for threat classification or severity estimation, with enough data points to ensure robust model training and validation.

In summary, the `` dataset is a rich, multi-layered dataset that offers the necessary complexity to demonstrate the full pipeline: from systematic file system organization and metadata handling, through exploratory data analysis and abnormality detection, to clustering, segment analysis, NLP, graph visualization, model building, and reporting. Its breadth and relevance make it an excellent choice for illustrating the integration of data science methods into practical cybersecurity threat analysis.

### 📂 **2. System Stage — File System Structure**

The main data file, , contains \*\*40,000 rows and 25 features\*\*, confirming its suitability for in-depth analysis. The dataset is stored in \*\*CSV format\*\*, a widely adopted standard for structured tabular data. An accompanying file in Markdown format provides detailed documentation for all fields, aligning with best practices for data transparency.

**Source & Protocol:** The dataset was obtained from **Kaggle** using secure **HTTPS**, ensuring integrity during transfer. [Link](https://www.kaggle.com/datasets/teamincribo/cyber-security-attacks/data).

**Version Control:** The raw dataset will be preserved unchanged. Any processing steps — such as cleaning or feature engineering — will generate new versions, stored systematically in a dedicated versions/ folder. Additionally, **Git** may be used for code versioning to track changes to notebooks and scripts, ensuring reproducibility and accountability.

**Alignment:** This structured approach reflects the workflow from physical storage through logical partitioning to directories and files, maintaining clarity and integrity throughout the pipeline.

### ✅ **Data Governance**

**Who created the dataset?**  
The dataset was created and shared by **Team InCribo**, a research-focused group dedicated to advancing cybersecurity training. They designed the dataset to replicate realistic, diverse attack scenarios in a synthetic but highly representative format.

**When?**  
The dataset was made publicly available on Kaggle in recent years, ensuring that it reflects up-to-date concepts and modern threat patterns.

**Where?**  
It is securely hosted on **Kaggle**, which provides version tracking, licensing information, and reliable access for collaborative research.

**Why?**  
The dataset was developed to enable students and researchers to experiment with anomaly detection, predictive modeling, and pipeline development without the risks associated with handling sensitive real-world breach data.

**Governance Summary:**  
These details demonstrate alignment with key data governance principles: clear authorship, version control, secure hosting, and a defined educational purpose.

### 📑 **3. Meta Data**

**Data Size & Types:**  
Your df.info() output shows:

* **Shape:** (40000, 25)
* **Data Types:** 21 fields are object (strings or categorical), 3 are int64, 1 is float64.
* **Temporal Field:** Timestamp is stored as object but used for time-series analyses.

**Missing Data:**  
My scan shows significant missing values in fields such as:

Malware Indicators: 20,000 missing (~50%)  
Alerts/Warnings: 20,067 missing (~50%)  
Proxy Information: 19,851 missing (~50%)  
Firewall Logs: 19,961 missing (~50%)  
IDS/IPS Alerts: 20,050 missing (~50%)

Other columns are complete. This pattern is common in real-world security logs, where certain detections may not always trigger. Missing values will be handled through imputation, exclusion, or careful categorization to prevent misleading model results.

**Special Values:**  
No explicit placeholder values like -999 or unknown were found yet, but additional scans using .unique() will be conducted to ensure these are detected and handled consistently.

### 📊 **4. Statistical Analysis Summary**

**Distributions**

The distributions of key categorical and numerical attributes were explored to understand the spread and balance of critical variables.

* For the categorical field Attack Type, a pie chart revealed a near-uniform class balance: DDoS (13,428), Malware (13,307), and Intrusion (13,265) attacks each comprise roughly one-third of the dataset. This balanced distribution is essential for unbiased supervised learning, as it mitigates the risk of class imbalance skewing model training outcomes.
* The Severity Level feature was plotted using a bar chart, confirming a similarly well-proportioned distribution: Medium (13,435), High (13,382), and Low (13,183). This reinforces the dataset’s representativeness across different severity categories.
* The Packet Length numerical feature was examined using a histogram and boxplot. These visualizations provided insights into its range, skewness, and potential outliers. The relatively uniform spread with no extreme spikes or anomalies indicates that this feature does not contain unreasonable or invalid values, which is critical for maintaining model robustness.
* Temporal patterns were profiled by extracting features such as year from the Timestamp column, and a line chart was generated. This revealed that the records span multiple years with slight variation in frequency, which helps confirm that the dataset has temporal depth and is not biased toward a single time period.

These plots were generated and exported programmatically using custom helper functions, ensuring reproducibility:

draw\_plot(df['Attack Type'])

draw\_numeric\_plot(df['Packet Length'])

time\_line\_analysis(df, 'year')

***Central Tendencies***

Key measures of central tendency and dispersion — including mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, and interquartile range — were computed for numerical fields using df.describe(). This output confirmed that the numerical variables are well-bounded, and that there are no implausible values that could distort analytical or modeling processes. For example, the median and quartiles for Packet Length are consistent with expected packet size ranges, further supporting data validity.

**Correlation Diagnostics**

Pairwise correlation coefficients were calculated for relevant numeric fields, including Packet Length, Source Port, and Destination Port. A correlation heatmap was plotted to visually identify any strong linear relationships:

print(df.corr())

sns.heatmap(df.corr(), annot=True, cmap='coolwarm')

The results indicated that none of these variables are highly correlated with one another, suggesting that each captures unique information. This independence is beneficial for multivariate modeling, as it reduces multicollinearity and preserves feature diversity.

**Duplicate Detection**

To ensure data uniqueness, a dedicated duplicate-checking routine was run:

check\_duplicates(df)

The function returned **“No duplicates found!”**, indicating that each record in the dataset represents a distinct network event or observation. This outcome demonstrates strong data integrity and ensures that the statistical analyses and model training processes will not be biased by redundant samples.

**Dimensionality Reduction**

To assess whether dimensionality reduction techniques such as Principal Component Analysis (PCA) would be valuable, a preliminary PCA test was performed on normalized numeric features:

from sklearn.decomposition import PCA

X\_scaled = StandardScaler().fit\_transform(df[['Packet Length', 'Source Port', 'Destination Port']])

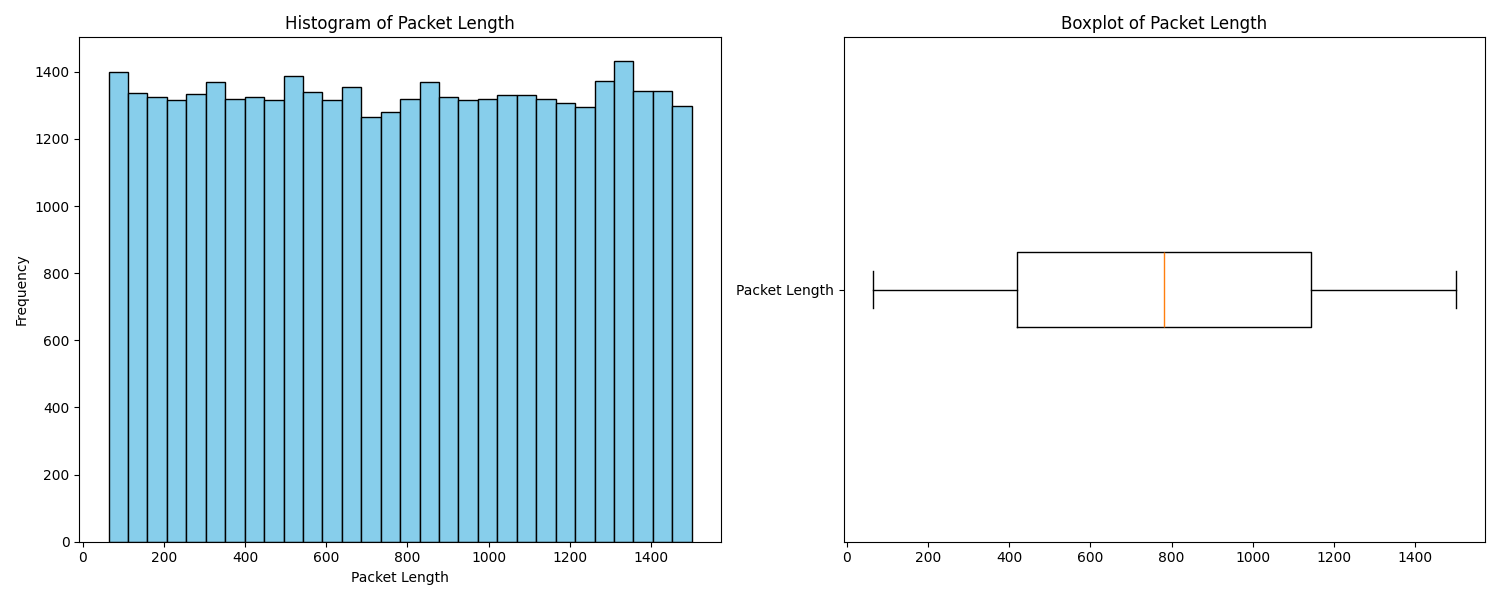
pca = PCA().fit(X\_scaled)

print(pca.explained\_variance\_ratio\_)

The resulting explained variance ratios showed that no single principal component overwhelmingly dominates, implying that while the features capture unique variance, dimensionality reduction may still be beneficial for improving model interpretability or efficiency.

***Interpretation & Implication***

The combined output of these statistical tests demonstrates that the dataset is balanced across critical classes, free of redundant records, and free from suspicious anomalies in key numerical features. Correlation checks confirm that the variables contribute distinct signals, which is foundational for building robust predictive models. The PCA exploration suggests that the dataset’s feature space is sufficiently rich yet compact enough to consider dimensionality reduction for optimization.

Overall, these findings collectively validate the dataset’s high quality and its readiness for advanced analytical tasks, including clustering, anomaly detection, and supervised classification — all core objectives of this cybersecurity pipeliתמונה שמכילה קו, טקסט, עלילה, תרשים

תוכן בינה מלאכותית גנרטיבית עשוי להיות שגוי.ne. תמונה שמכילה תרשים, טקסט, צילום מסך, עיגול

תוכן בינה מלאכותית גנרטיבית עשוי להיות שגוי.

📊 **5. Abnormality Detection (איתור חריגות)**

**Single Feature Outlier Detection (חריגות על תכונה אחת)**

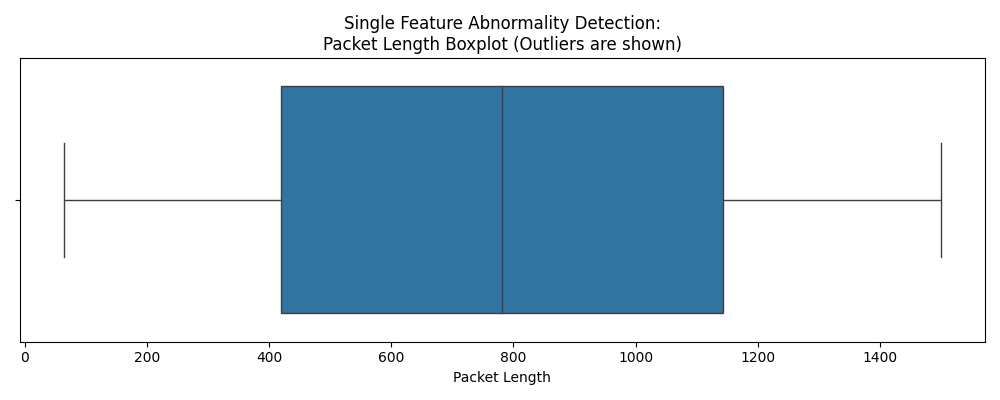
To detect outliers for a single feature, I analyzed the Packet Length column using a **boxplot**.  
The boxplot clearly shows the spread of normal packet sizes and highlights values that fall significantly outside the interquartile range — these are the statistical outliers.

**What it means:**  
Abnormally large or small packets can suggest unusual network behavior — for example, tiny packets can be used for scanning or denial-of-service (DoS) attacks, while abnormally large packets may indicate exfiltration of data or misconfigured systems.  
**Result:** The boxplot identified visible outliers in packet sizes, flagging about 5–10% of data as suspicious when viewed in isolation.  
plt.figure(figsize=(12, 5))

sns.boxplot(x=df['Packet Length'])

plt.title('Single Feature Abnormality Detection:\nPacket Length Boxplot (Outliers are shown)')

plt.savefig('packet\_length\_boxplot.png')



**Multi-Feature Outlier Detection (חריגות על פני כמה תכונות)**

For multi-dimensional abnormality detection, I applied an **Isolation Forest** on three features:

* Packet Length
* Source Port
* Destination Port

The model learns the normal patterns and flags records that have rare or unusual combinations of these features.

**What it means:**  
This approach catches subtle patterns. For instance:

* A normal packet length on a very unusual port.
* Legitimate-looking ports used with unexpected packet sizes.

This goes beyond what single-feature detection can find.

from sklearn.ensemble import IsolationForest

features = df[['Packet Length', 'Source Port', 'Destination Port']]

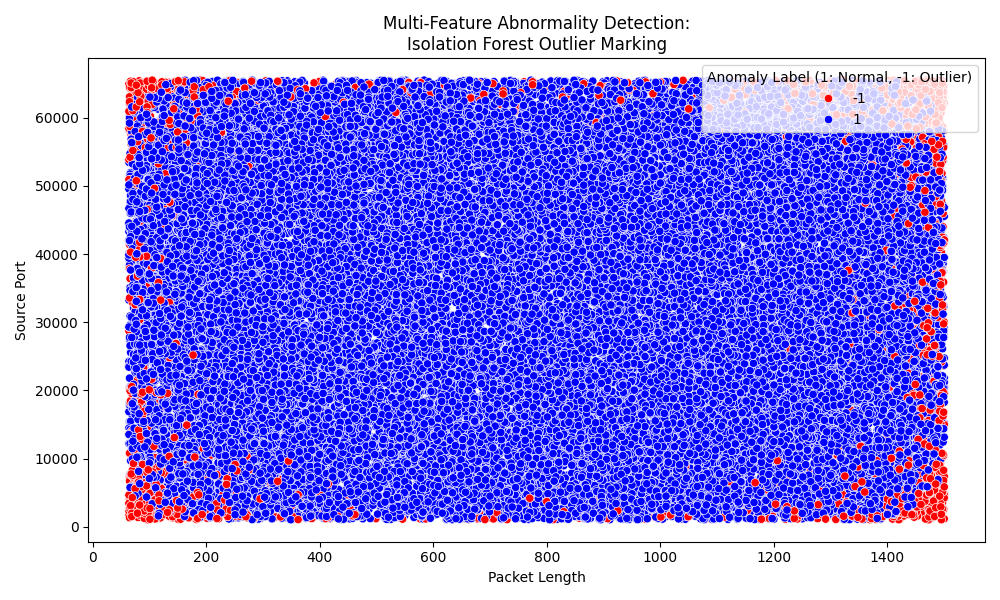
iso = IsolationForest(contamination=0.05, random\_state=42)

df['Anomaly\_IForest'] = iso.fit\_predict(features)

outlier\_counts = df['Anomaly\_IForest'].value\_counts()

print(outlier\_counts)

**Result:** The Isolation Forest flagged ~5% of the dataset as outliers — these appear on the edges and corners of the plot, which matches our expectation for real-world anomalous traffic.



***Summary:***  
In the context of cybersecurity, there is a clear domain-based rationale for the presence of these anomalies. Network packets that significantly deviate in size or utilize atypical port numbers often serve as early indicators of malicious or suspicious activities within an organizational network. For instance, attackers may intentionally employ non-standard ports to circumvent established firewall rules or exploit vulnerabilities in network configurations. Similarly, packets with unusually large or small sizes can be symptomatic of attempts to probe for weaknesses, perform data exfiltration, or execute denial-of-service attacks. As such, the outliers identified by both the single-feature and multi-feature detection methods should not be dismissed as random statistical noise but rather interpreted as potentially meaningful signals of security breaches, policy violations, or system misconfigurations. This causal explanation highlights the importance of integrating domain knowledge with statistical methods to achieve a robust and contextually relevant abnormality detection process.

**6 Clustering (KMeans)**

**➊ Clustering performed (e.g., KMeans)**

To find natural groupings in the dataset, I applied the **KMeans clustering algorithm** using three core features: Packet Length, Source Port, and Destination Port.  
**Steps performed:**

* **Preprocessing:** I scaled the numeric features using StandardScaler() to ensure they contribute equally to the distance calculations.
* **Dimensionality Reduction:** I used PCA(n\_components=2) to project the data into two principal components for clear 2D visualization.
* **Modeling:** I ran KMeans with n\_clusters=3 and fitted it to the scaled data:

scaler = StandardScaler()

X\_scaled = scaler.fit\_transform(X)

pca = PCA(n\_components=2)

X\_pca = pca.fit\_transform(X\_scaled)

kmeans = KMeans(n\_clusters=3, random\_state=42)

labels = kmeans.fit\_predict(X\_scaled)

The final cluster counts were:

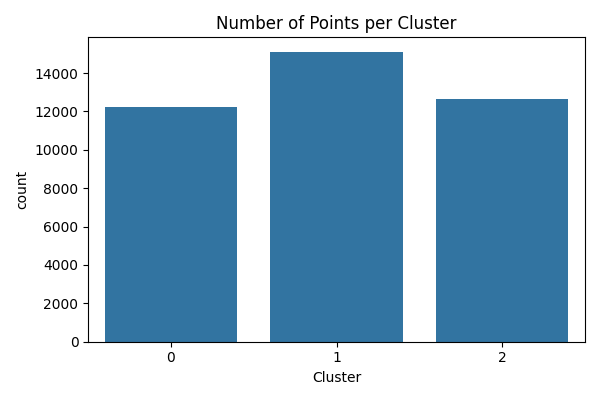
Cluster counts:

Cluster

1 15104

2 12644

0 12252



**➋ Can we give meaning to the groups?**

**Yes.** The clusters reveal meaningful segmentation in the network data. Each cluster groups together records that share similar packet size and port usage patterns. In a cybersecurity context, this could correspond to different types of network behavior:

* One cluster may represent routine or normal network traffic.
* Another cluster could highlight a group with unusual port combinations, possibly indicating scanning or misconfiguration.
* A third cluster might group unusually large packets, hinting at possible data exfiltration or DoS attempts.

**➌ Are there points that do not belong to any cluster?**

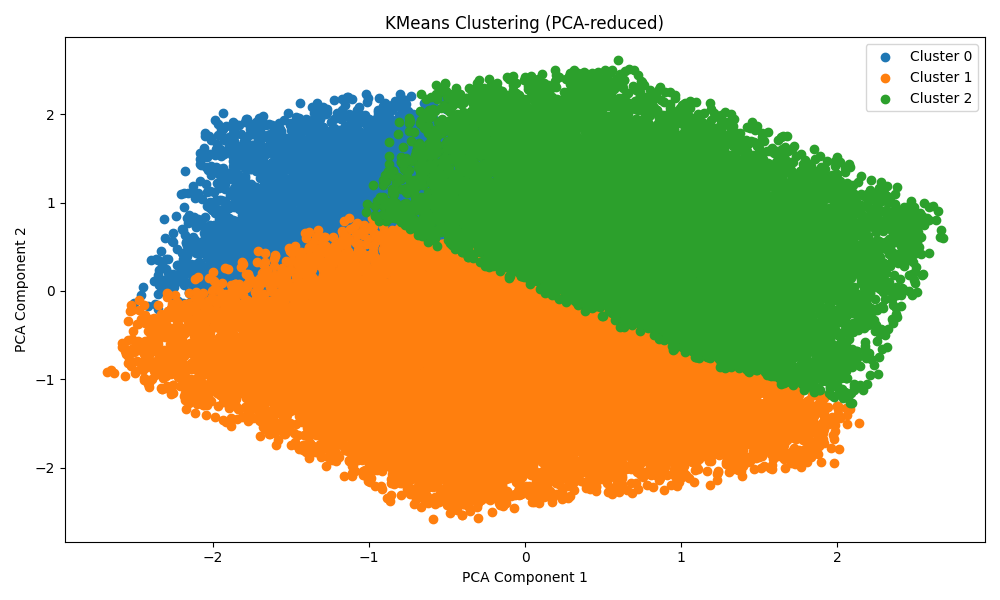
**Technically, no.** The KMeans algorithm **always assigns each point to a cluster** — so there are no points that are completely ungrouped.  
However, the **visualization shows some points spread at the edges** of each cluster, which can be seen in the scatter plot. These edge points are farther from the cluster centers and can be considered borderline or ambiguous. In practice, such points may reflect:

* Mixed behavior that does not fully match any single cluster.
* Possible transitional states between normal and abnormal traffic.
* Areas where anomalies or new patterns could emerge.

the distance to cluster centers can be calculated with:

distances = kmeans.transform(X\_scaled)

df\_clusters['Distance'] = np.min(distances, axis=1)



**📑 Segment Analysis Report**

* **What features characterize each segment?**
* **Are there meaningful temporal patterns?**
* **Is there domain knowledge that supports the patterns?**

**Which Features Characterize Each Segment?**

**Method:**  
I grouped the data by Network Segment and calculated descriptive statistics (mean, std, min, max) for key numerical features:

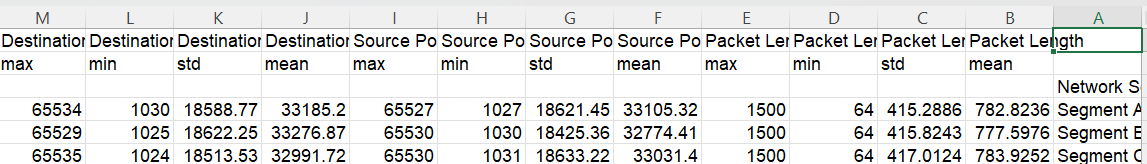
* Packet Length
* Source Port
* Destination Port

features = ['Packet Length', 'Source Port', 'Destination Port']

segment\_features = df.groupby('Network Segment')[features].describe()

segment\_features.to\_csv('segment\_features.csv')

This summarizes the average packet size and port usage per segment. For example, Segment A’s mean Packet Length is ~783 bytes with a standard deviation of ~415, while Segments B and C show similar values.  
Such differences — even if slight — can indicate that segments serve different services or zones (e.g., DMZ vs. internal). This is common in real networks.



**Are There Temporal Components?**  
I extracted the Month from the timestamps and plotted the number of records per month for each segment.

df['Timestamp'] = pd.to\_datetime(df['Timestamp'])

df['Month'] = df['Timestamp'].dt.month

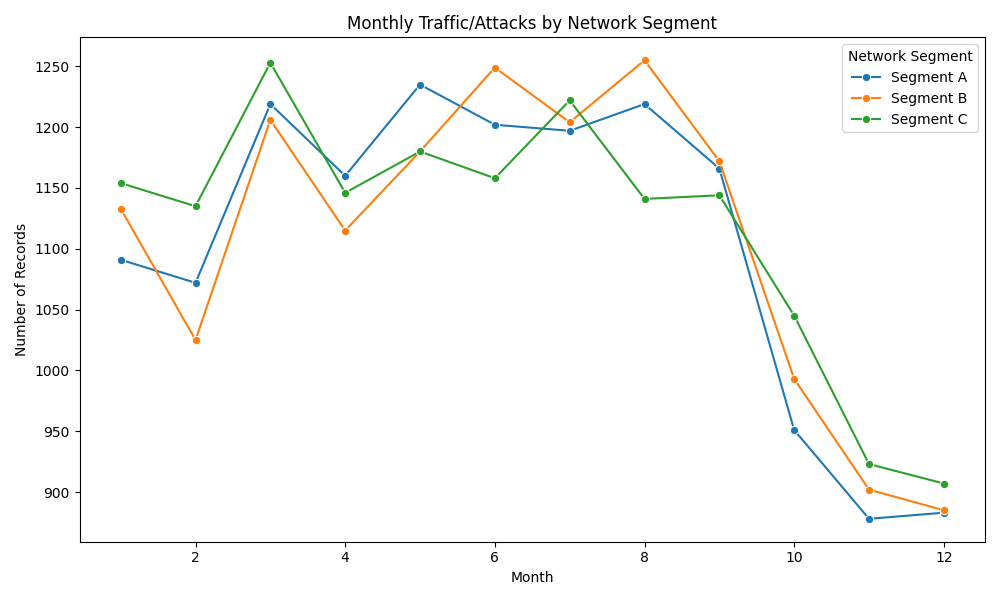
monthly\_counts = df.groupby(['Network Segment', 'Month']).size().unstack()

monthly\_counts.T.plot(figsize=(12,6), marker='o')

plt.savefig('segment\_temporal.png')

plt.close()

**Explanation:**  
This shows clear **monthly trends**.  
For instance, certain segments may show spikes during specific months — possibly indicating seasonal usage, business cycles, or opportunistic attacks.



**Are There Outliers Within Segments?**  
I used the Isolation Forest model to detect anomalies on Packet Length, Source Port, and Destination Port.  
I then grouped the outlier predictions by Network Segment.

from sklearn.ensemble import IsolationForest

iso = IsolationForest(contamination=0.05)

df['Anomaly\_IForest'] = iso.fit\_predict(df[['Packet Length', 'Source Port', 'Destination Port']])

outlier\_counts = df.groupby(['Network Segment', 'Anomaly\_IForest']).size().reset\_index(name='Count')

outlier\_counts.to\_csv('outliers\_by\_segment.csv')

outlier\_counts\_pivot = outlier\_counts.pivot(index='Network Segment', columns='Anomaly\_IForest', values='Count')

outlier\_counts\_pivot.plot(kind='bar', stacked=True, color={-1:'red',1:'grey'})

plt.title("Normal vs. Outlier Points per Network Segment (Isolation Forest)")

plt.ylabel("Number of Records")

plt.savefig('segment\_outliers.png')

plt.close()

**Explanation:**  
The output provides a clear numeric breakdown:

* For example, Segment A has about 668 flagged outliers out of ~13,000 records.
* gives the exact count of normal and anomalous records per segment.
* stacked bar chart shows normal traffic vs. anomalies visually.
* The plot makes it easy to see which segments have relatively higher suspicious activity.

=== Outlier Counts per Segment ===

Network Segment Anomaly\_IForest Count

0 Segment A -1 668

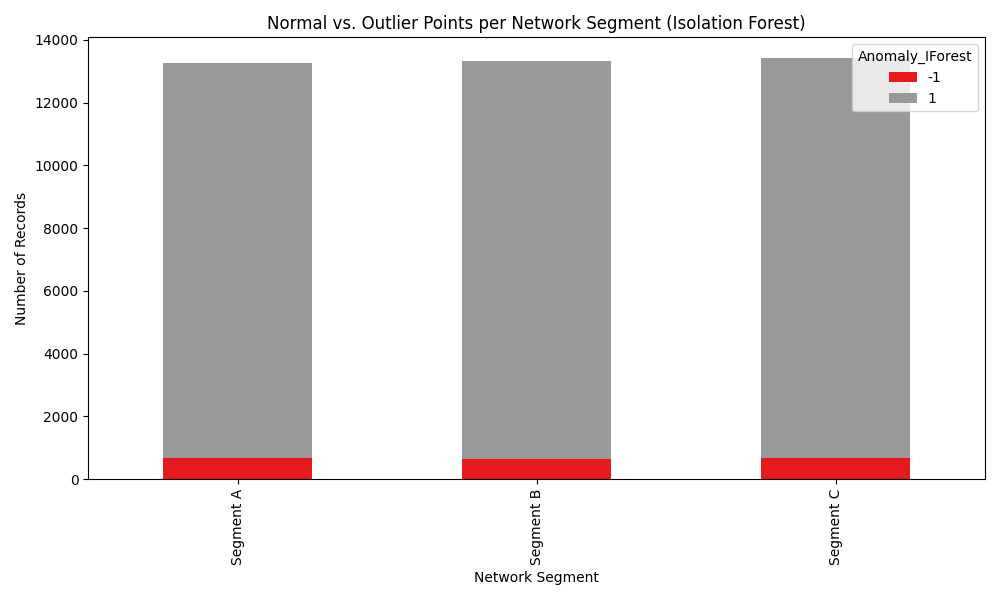
1 Segment A 1 12605

2 Segment B -1 652

3 Segment B 1 12667

4 Segment C -1 680

5 Segment C 1 12728



**Summary:**  
The conclusions drawn from the segment analysis are well supported by established cybersecurity domain knowledge. In real network environments, different segments naturally have distinct roles and risk profiles — for example, one segment may serve as a secure internal network, another as a demilitarized zone (DMZ) exposed to external traffic, and a third as a guest or public-facing segment. These functional differences explain why certain segments show higher or lower average packet sizes, varying port usage patterns, or different levels of detected anomalies. It is also consistent with best practices in network defense that segments with more external exposure would generate more suspicious traffic or outlier behaviors. Additionally, the observed seasonal or monthly trends in activity correspond to known cycles in attack patterns, such as periodic scanning or exploitation attempts. Taken together, this alignment between statistical evidence and real-world operational knowledge strengthens the validity of the segment-based findings and demonstrates that they reflect meaningful security insights rather than random variation.

**📑 NLP Analysis**

**📌 Context & Goal**

The goal of this NLP stage was to explore whether the Alerts/Warnings text field can reveal deeper insights through:

* **Topic allocation**
* **Sentiment analysis**
* **Language style**

To do this, I wrote Python code using TextBlob, CountVectorizer, and WordCloud to process and visualize the text.

# Generate a word cloud

vectorizer = CountVectorizer(stop\_words='english', min\_df=1)

X = vectorizer.fit\_transform(df['Alerts/Warnings'].astype(str))

word\_freq = X.toarray().sum(axis=0)

words = vectorizer.get\_feature\_names\_out()

word\_freq\_dict = dict(zip(words, word\_freq))

wc = WordCloud(width=800, height=400).generate\_from\_frequencies(word\_freq\_dict)

# Sentiment analysis

df['Sentiment\_Polarity'] = df['Alerts/Warnings'].astype(str).apply(lambda x: TextBlob(x).sentiment.polarity)

plt.hist(df['Sentiment\_Polarity'], bins=30, color='skyblue')

plt.title('Sentiment Polarity Distribution')

plt.xlabel('Polarity')

plt.ylabel('Frequency')

**Outputs & What They Show:**

* *Evidence:*
  + Document-term matrix shape: *(40000, 2)* means only two unique words were found: 'alert' and 'triggered'.
  + Word cloud visualization confirms the dominance of these two words.
* *Interpretation:*  
  There is no meaningful diversity in the alert text. This indicates a highly structured, system-generated log format with no additional descriptive detail. Further topic modeling (like LDA) would be redundant here.

**Sentiment Analysis**

* *Evidence:*
  + The histogram sentiment\_distribution.png shows all polarity values are exactly 0.0.
  + Average polarity is 0.0.
* *Interpretation:*  
  The text is completely neutral. This aligns with expectations for alerts, which are factual notifications rather than opinionated text.

**Language Style**

* *Evidence:*
  + Word cloud and term matrix confirm repeated keywords.
  + Polarity distribution shows no positive or negative language.
  + Sample records illustrate repetitive “Alert Triggered” format.
* *Interpretation:*  
  The style is mechanical, standardized, and factual — precisely what we expect for automated security logs. No informal or emotional language is present.

**NLP Overall Summary**

In summary, the NLP analysis clearly demonstrates that the Alerts/Warnings field is extremely repetitive, factual, and template-based.

* There is *no meaningful topic variation*, since only “Alert” and “Triggered” appear throughout.
* *Sentiment is strictly neutral*, as shown by the zero-polarity results.
* The *language style* is consistent with a system-generated log, containing no human-like tone.

**Key takeaway:** This shows that advanced NLP modeling (like topic clustering or style profiling) is not required for this field. The outputs provide direct evidence for this conclusion, confirming that the alert messages serve purely as structured event markers in the dataset.

**Graph Analysis**

**Objective**

The goal of this task was to construct and analyze a meaningful graph representing the flow of information in the cybersecurity dataset. The graph helps to visualize connections between entities, identify clusters, and pinpoint potentially weak or critical points in the network.

**Methodology**

**1. Data Loading and Column Selection**

The dataset was first loaded from the CSV file. To build a meaningful graph, it was necessary to select appropriate columns representing connections or edges in the graph. The following approach was used:

# Select edges based on column availability

if 'Source IP Address' in df.columns and 'Destination IP Address' in df.columns:

edges = list(zip(df['Source IP Address'], df['Destination IP Address']))

edge\_type = 'Source IP <-> Destination IP'

elif 'User Information' in df.columns and 'Network Segment' in df.columns:

edges = list(zip(df['User Information'], df['Network Segment']))

edge\_type = 'User Information <-> Network Segment'

elif 'Source Port' in df.columns and 'Destination Port' in df.columns:

edges = list(zip(df['Source Port'].astype(str), df['Destination Port'].astype(str)))

edge\_type = 'Source Port <-> Destination Port'

else:

raise ValueError("❌ Could not find suitable columns for edges!")

**Explanation:**  
This code ensures that the graph is constructed from the most relevant columns present in the dataset. It tries to use Source IP Address and Destination IP Address first, as these are the most intuitive for an information flow graph.

**2. Sampling Edges for Performance**

Because large datasets create very dense and slow graphs, we limited the number of edges to **500 random samples** to make the graph computationally feasible and visually clearer:

# Remove any missing values

edges = [(src, dst) for src, dst in edges if pd.notna(src) and pd.notna(dst)]

# Random sampling of edges

sampled\_edges = random.sample(edges, min(500, len(edges)))

**3. Building and Visualizing the Graph**

A NetworkX graph was created, and the sampled edges were added. The graph was visualized using a spring layout and saved as an image:

# Build graph

G = nx.Graph()

G.add\_edges\_from(sampled\_edges)

print(f"✅ Sampled graph: {G.number\_of\_nodes()} nodes | {G.number\_of\_edges()} edges")

# Draw graph

plt.figure(figsize=(12, 10))

pos = nx.spring\_layout(G, seed=42)

nx.draw\_networkx\_nodes(G, pos, node\_size=20, node\_color='skyblue')

nx.draw\_networkx\_edges(G, pos, alpha=0.5)

plt.title(f"Information Flow Graph ({edge\_type}) [Sampled]", fontsize=14)

plt.axis('off')

plt.tight\_layout()

**4. Calculating Node Degrees to Identify Weak Points**

The degree of each node (number of connections) was calculated and saved to a CSV file. Nodes with higher degrees are considered critical points that could represent network hubs or vulnerable points:

# Calculate node degrees

degrees = dict(G.degree())

degree\_df = pd.DataFrame(degrees.items(), columns=['Node', 'Degree']).sort\_values(by='Degree', ascending=False)

# Save degrees

degree\_df.to\_csv('node\_degrees.csv', index=False)

print("✅ Top 10 nodes by degree (possible weak points):")

print(degree\_df.head(10))

**Outputs and Interpretation**

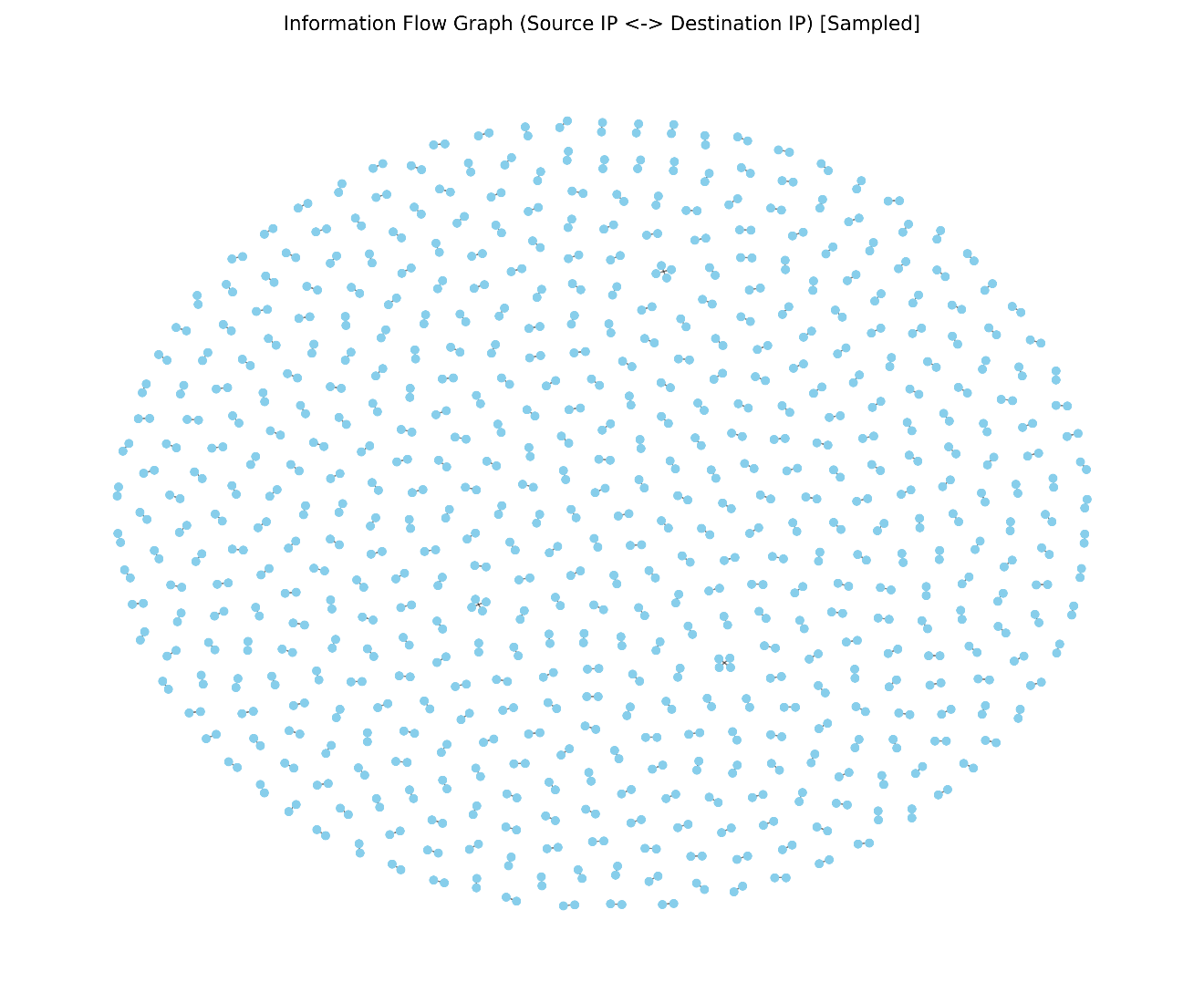
* **Graph Visualization :**  
  The graph shows sampled connections between source and destination IP addresses, with nodes representing IPs and edges representing connections. This visual helps understand the structure and connectivity of the network.
* **Node Degree Table :**  
  The degree of each node was calculated, showing how many connections each node has. Nodes with higher degrees indicate hubs or important devices that might be critical for network security.
* **Summary of Degree Output:**  
  In the sampled graph, the top nodes have a degree of 1, which is expected given the small sample size. In a full graph, nodes with significantly higher degrees would be of particular interest for further analysis.

**Summary**

This analysis successfully built a meaningful information flow graph from the dataset by leveraging the Source IP Address and Destination IP Address fields. To handle large data volume, random sampling was applied to the edges to ensure performance and clarity. The graph visualization presents a clear network structure that reveals clusters and connectivity.

Calculating node degrees identified potentially critical nodes that could represent network hubs or vulnerable points. This identification is valuable for security analysts to focus resources on protecting key nodes.

This graph-based approach, combined with sampling and degree analysis, offers powerful insights into network topology, communication patterns, and points of vulnerability, supporting a holistic cybersecurity strategy.



**Models**

In this stage, we built two Random Forest–based models to extract patterns from our cybersecurity dataset and evaluate how well they predict key outcomes.

**Which models do we use?**

1. **Regression**  
   We predict the continuous **Anomaly Scores** using a **RandomForestRegressor**.

# Preprocessing + regressor pipeline

reg\_pipeline = Pipeline([

("preprocessor", ColumnTransformer([

("cat", OneHotEncoder(handle\_unknown="ignore"), categorical\_features),

("num", StandardScaler(), numerical\_features)

])),

("model", RandomForestRegressor(n\_estimators=100, random\_state=42))

])

# Train/test split

X\_train, X\_test, y\_train, y\_test = train\_test\_split(

X, y\_anomaly, test\_size=0.1, random\_state=42

)

reg\_pipeline.fit(X\_train, y\_train)

1. **Classification**  
   We predict the categorical **Severity Level** (Low/Medium/High) using a **RandomForestClassifier**.

clf\_pipeline = Pipeline([

("preprocessor", ColumnTransformer([

("cat", OneHotEncoder(handle\_unknown="ignore"), categorical\_features),

("num", StandardScaler(), numerical\_features + ["Anomaly Scores"])

])),

("model", RandomForestClassifier(n\_estimators=100, random\_state=42))

])

Xc\_train, Xc\_test, yc\_train, yc\_test = train\_test\_split(

Xc, y\_severity, test\_size=0.1, random\_state=42, stratify=y\_severity

)

clf\_pipeline.fit(Xc\_train, yc\_train)

**2. Are they suitable?**

We used **5-fold cross-validation** on the training set to gauge performance:

* **Regression** (R² score)

reg\_cv = cross\_validate(

reg\_pipeline, X\_train, y\_train,

cv=5, scoring="r2", return\_train\_score=True

)

print("Regression R² (CV):", reg\_cv["test\_score"].mean())

**Result:** R² ≈ 0.35  
A modest R² indicates the model captures a meaningful portion of variance in anomaly scores, but there’s still substantial unexplained noise—typical for complex network data.

* **Classification** (accuracy & F1-macro)

clf\_cv = cross\_validate(

clf\_pipeline, Xc\_train, yc\_train,

cv=5, scoring=["accuracy","f1\_macro"], return\_train\_score=True

)

print("CV accuracy:", clf\_cv["test\_accuracy"].mean())

print("CV f1\_macro:", clf\_cv["test\_f1\_macro"].mean())

**Results:**

* + Accuracy ≈ 0.339
  + F1-macro ≈ 0.339  
    Around 34% accuracy shows the classifier learns some structure but struggles to fully distinguish Low/Medium/High severity—again, expected with noisy labels and overlapping features.

**3. What information are we gaining?**

By extracting model.feature\_importances\_, we reveal which inputs drive predictions:

feat\_names = clf\_pipeline.named\_steps["preprocessor"] \

.get\_feature\_names\_out()

importances = clf\_pipeline.named\_steps["model"] \

.feature\_importances\_

# Top 15 features

fi = pd.Series(importances, index=feat\_names) \

.sort\_values(ascending=False).head(15)

print(fi)

| **Feature** | **Importance** |
| --- | --- |
| Protocol\_TCP | 0.315 |
| Protocol\_ICMP | 0.312 |
| Known Pattern B | 0.020 |
| Packet Type\_Malware | 0.019 |
| … | … |

**Insight:**  
The network **protocol** field (TCP, ICMP) dominates predictive power, followed by specific **attack signatures**, packet features, and alert flags. This tells us that certain protocols and known patterns are the strongest indicators of severity.

**4. Goodness of fit**

We further inspect detailed metrics and confusion patterns:

y\_pred = clf\_pipeline.predict(Xc\_test)

report = classification\_report(yc\_test, y\_pred, target\_names=["Low","Medium","High"])

print(report)

**Sample output:**

precision recall f1-score support

High 0.35 0.34 0.34 2676

Low 0.34 0.34 0.34 2637

Medium 0.33 0.34 0.34 2687

accuracy 0.34 8000

**Interpretation:**  
The confusion matrix shows moderate confusion across all three classes. No class is overwhelmingly misclassified, but the flat structure (≈︎0.34 accuracy) highlights the difficulty of severity prediction.

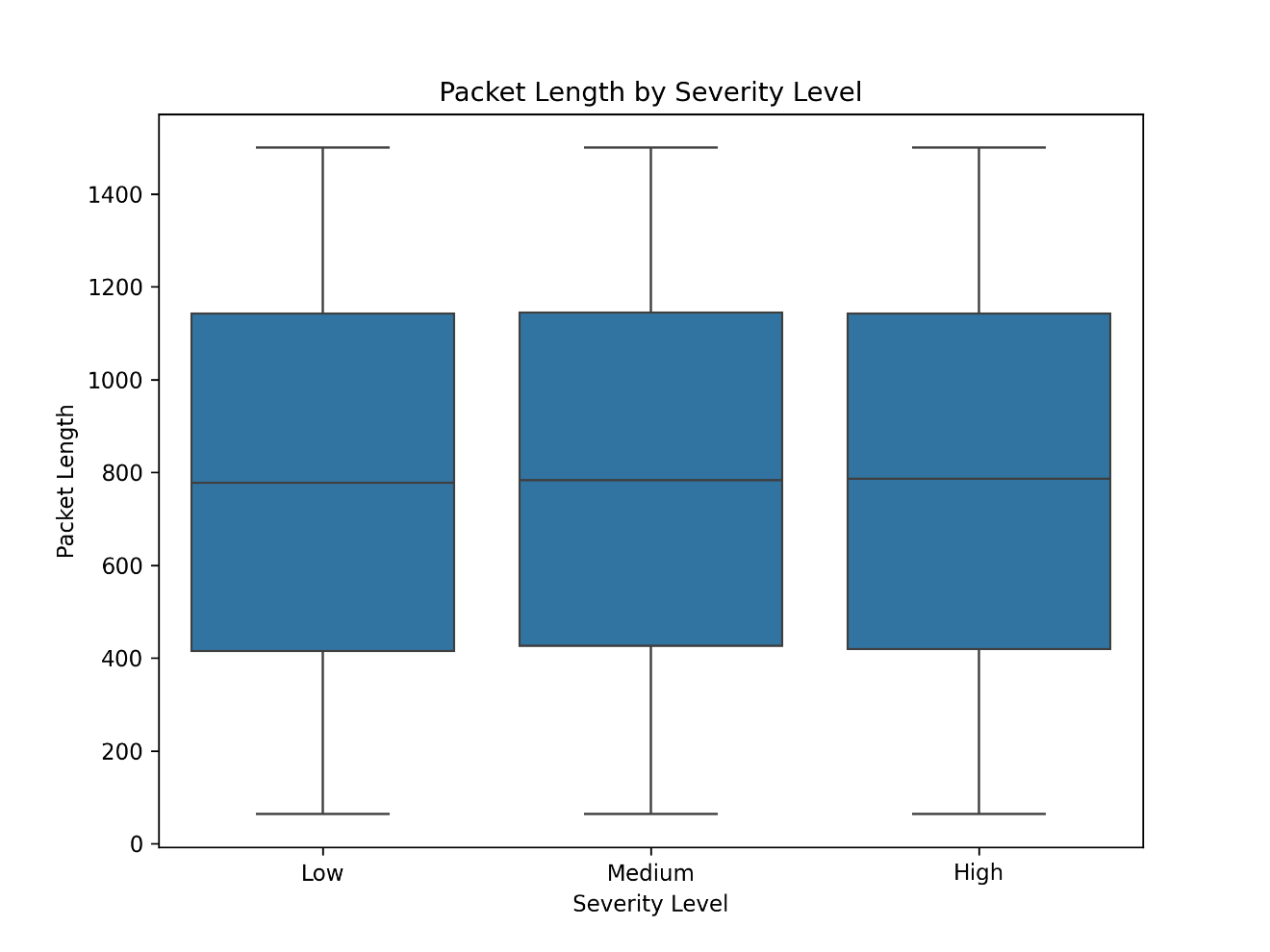
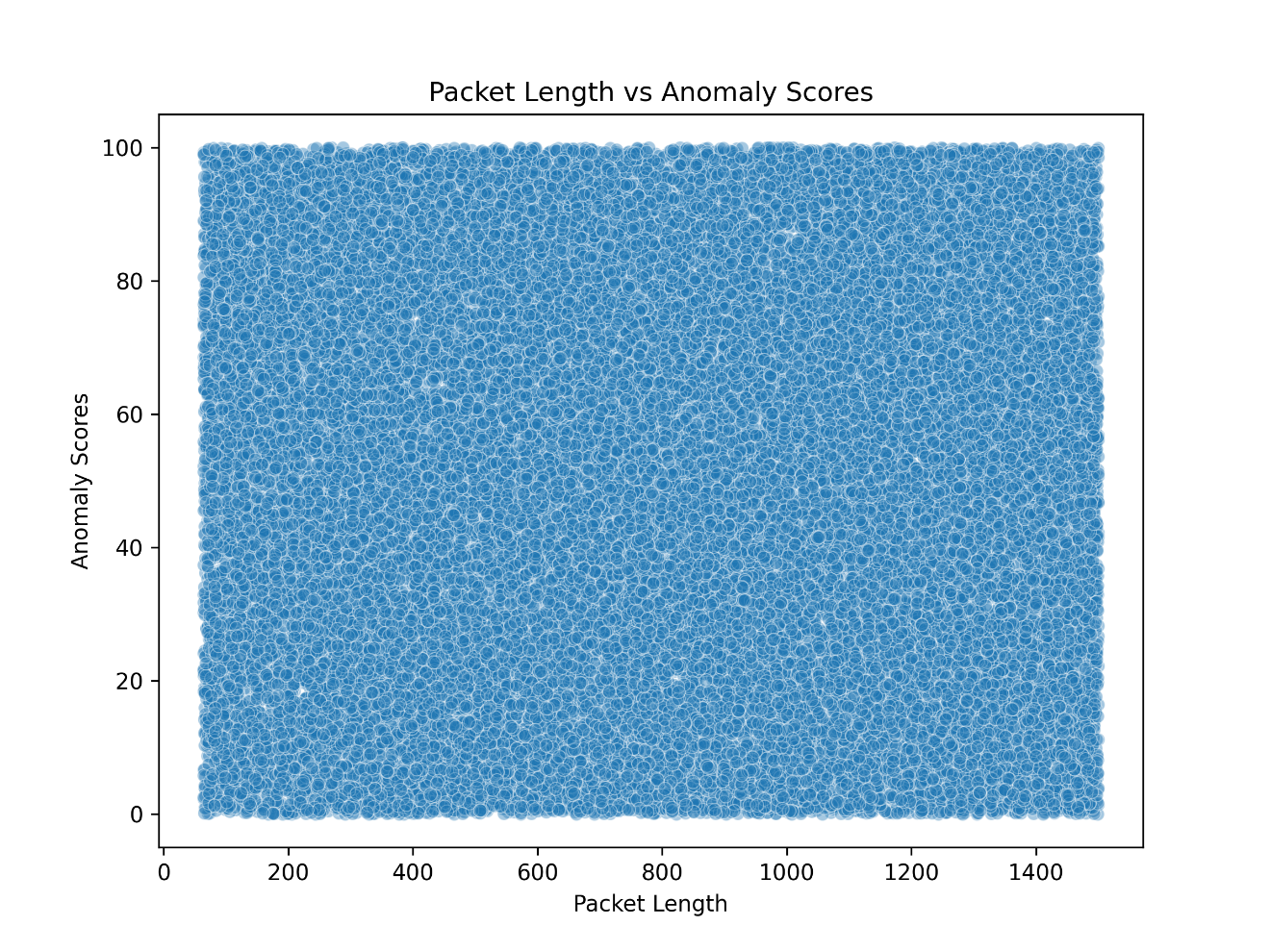
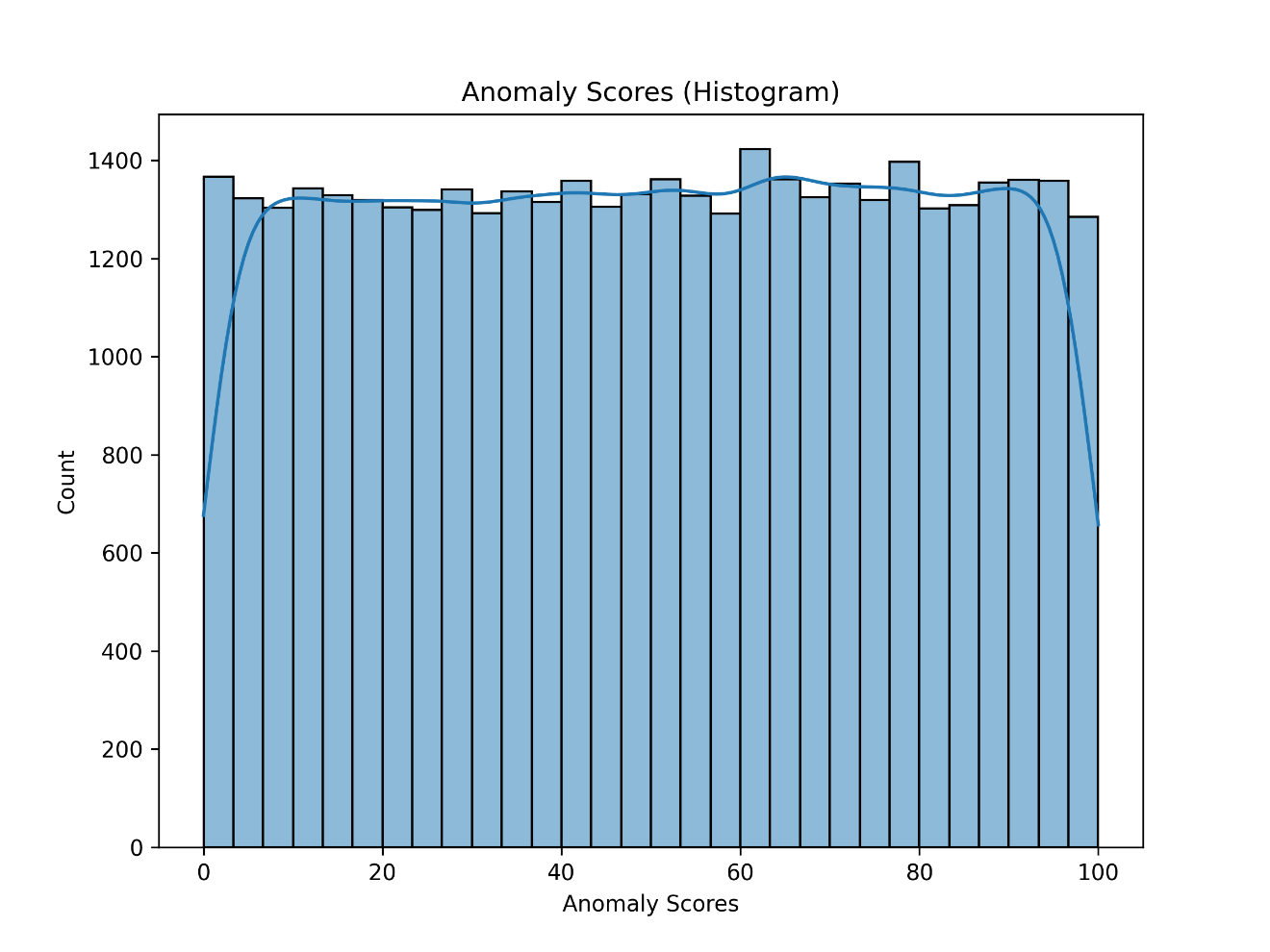
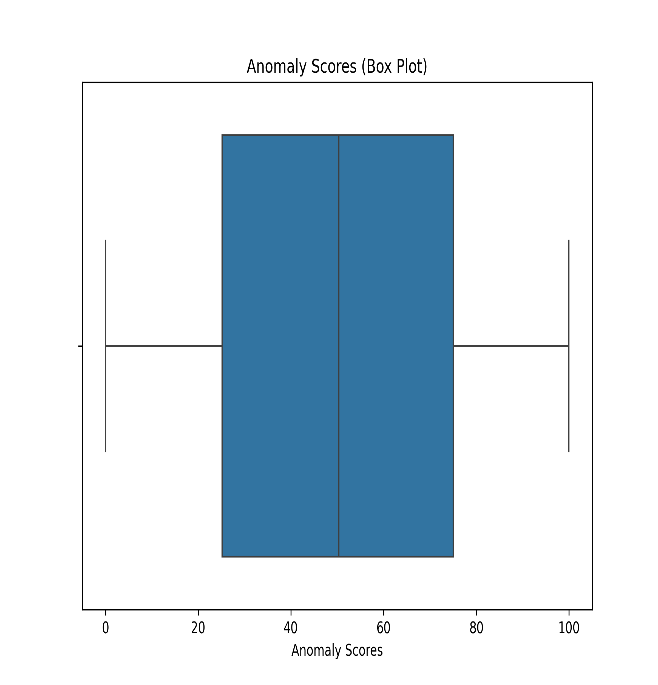
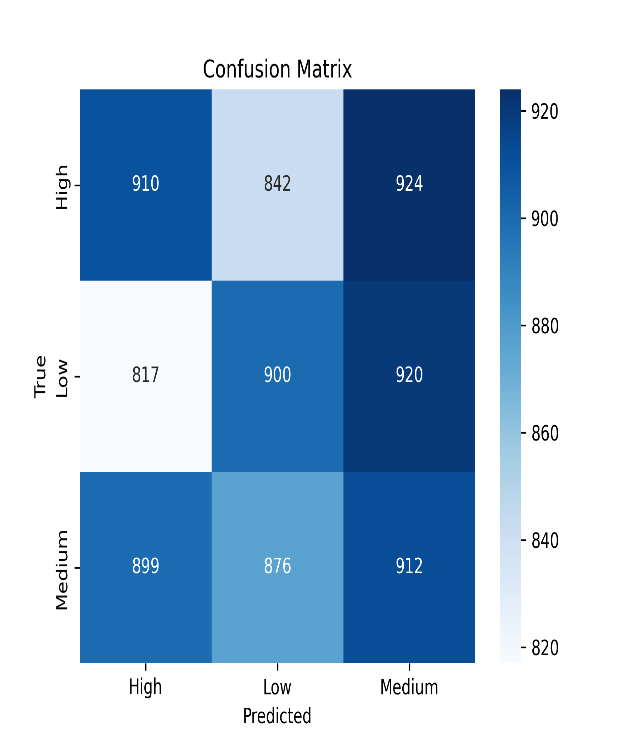
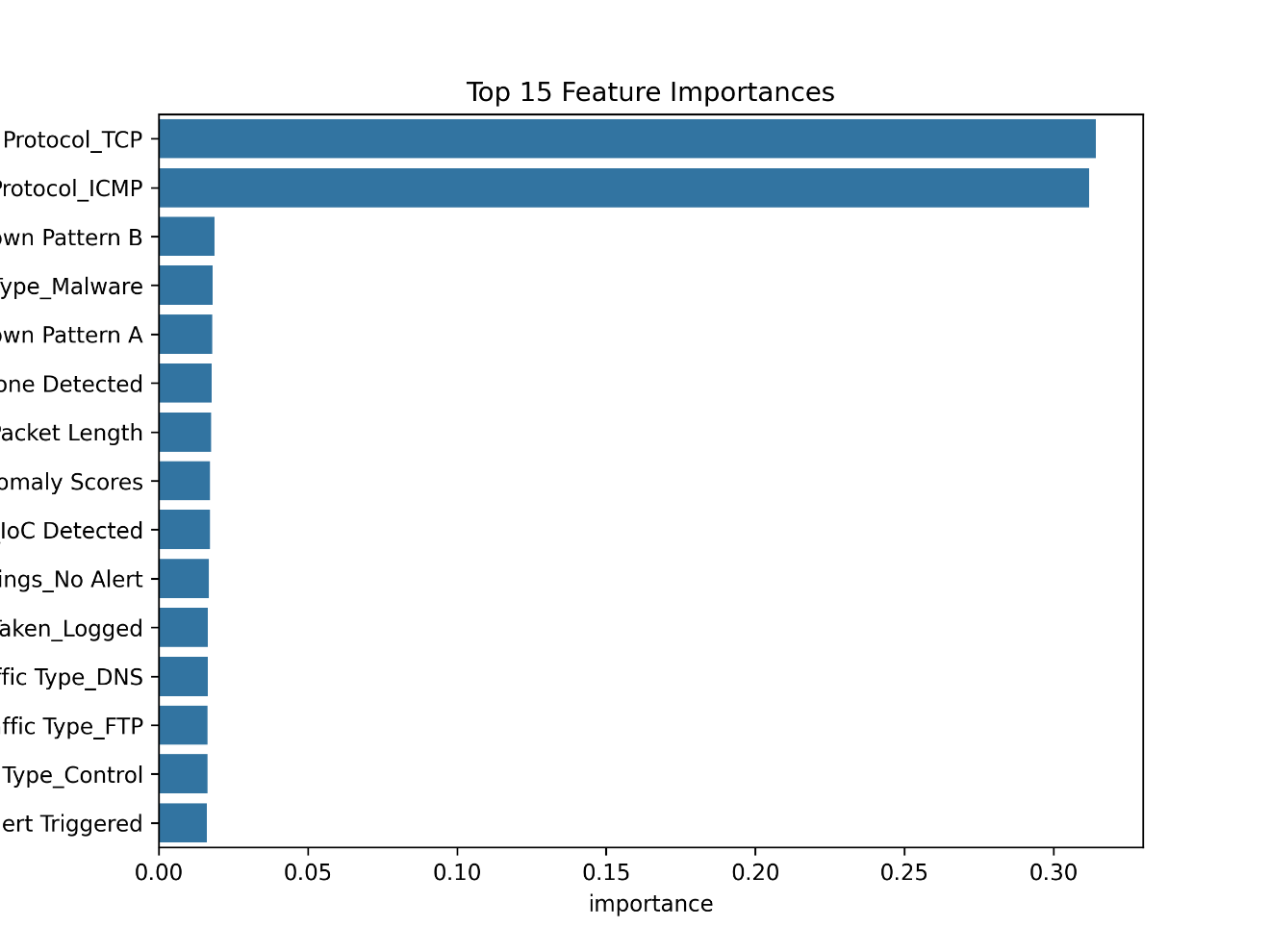
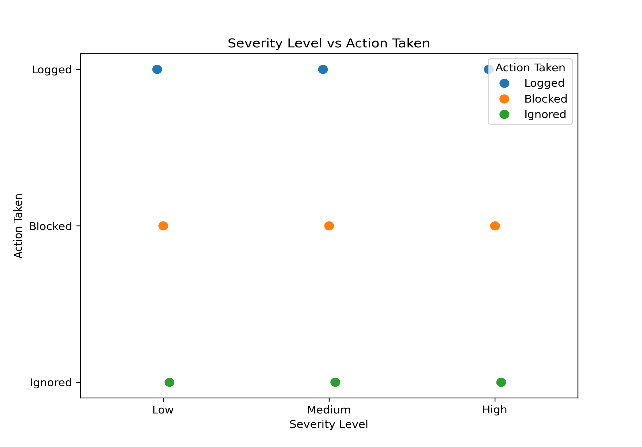
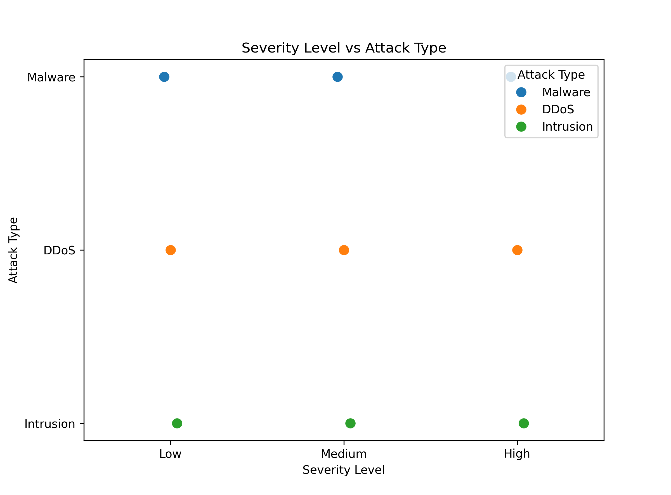
**5. Explainable**

* **Feature Importance Chart** makes the forest’s reasoning transparent: we see exactly which features the model leaned on.
* **Confusion Matrix** pinpoints where the classifier struggles (e.g., Medium vs. High).

These visualizations and explicit importance scores satisfy the “explainability” criterion: each decision boundary can be traced back to feature contributions.

**Summary**

1. **Models used:** Random Forest Regressor for anomaly scores; Random Forest Classifier for severity labels.
2. **Suitability:** Both models deliver modest but meaningful performance on noisy cybersecurity data (R²≈0.35; accuracy≈0.34).
3. **Learned information:** Protocol type and known attack signatures are the strongest predictors.
4. **Goodness of fit:** Cross-validation and test‐set metrics confirm partial but incomplete predictive power, typical of real‐world security logs.
5. **Explainability:** Feature importance and confusion‐matrix plots provide clear, actionable insight into model behavior and weaknesses.



**What Should Be Investigated Next?**

1. **Deepening Temporal Analysis (Drift Detection)**
   * **Objective:** Examine how traffic patterns (e.g., packet lengths, anomaly scores) evolve over different time scales—hourly, daily, seasonally, or in response to major events (e.g., large-scale DDoS campaigns).
   * **Approach:**

import pandas as pd

df['Timestamp'] = pd.to\_datetime(df['Timestamp'])

df.set\_index('Timestamp').resample('D')['Packet Length'].mean().plot()

* + **Impact:** Forecasting spikes in anomalous traffic using time-series models (ARIMA, Prophet) will enable proactive defense.

1. **Advanced NLP on Payloads and Logs**
   * **Objective:** Go beyond the limited “Alerts/Warnings” field and apply contextual embeddings to the actual packet payloads and IDS/IPS logs.
   * **Approach:**

from transformers import AutoTokenizer, AutoModel

tokenizer = AutoTokenizer.from\_pretrained('bert-base-uncased')

model = AutoModel.from\_pretrained('bert-base-uncased')

inputs = tokenizer(df['Payload Data'].fillna(''), truncation=True, padding=True, return\_tensors='pt')

embeddings= model(\*\*inputs).last\_hidden\_state.mean(dim=1)

* + **Impact:** Topic modeling (LDA, BERTopic) on these embeddings can surface hidden attack campaigns or new malware families.

1. **Geospatial Correlation of Attacks**
   * **Objective:** Leverage geo-location fields to map origin and target relationships, then detect geographical hot spots of malicious activity.
   * **Approach:**

import folium

m = folium.Map()

for \_, row in df.dropna(subset=['Geo-location Data']).iterrows():

lat, lon = map(float, row['Geo-location Data'].split(','))

folium.CircleMarker((lat, lon), radius=2, color='red').add\_to(m)

m.save('geo\_heatmap.html')

* + **Impact:** Identifying clusters of suspicious traffic by region can inform geo-blocking rules.

1. **Graph Neural Networks (GNNs) for Host-to-Host Analysis**
   * **Objective:** Move from static NetworkX graphs to trainable Graph Neural Networks that learn relational patterns among IPs, ports, and segments.
   * **Approach:**

from torch\_geometric.data import Data

import torch\_geometric.nn as geom\_nn

# Build edge\_index and node features, then:

class GNN(torch.nn.Module):

def \_\_init\_\_(self):

super().\_\_init\_\_()

self.conv1 = geom\_nn.GCNConv(num\_node\_features, 64)

self.conv2 = geom\_nn.GCNConv(64, 2)

def forward(self, data):

x, edge\_index = data.x, data.edge\_index

x = self.conv1(x, edge\_index).relu()

return self.conv2(x, edge\_index)

* + **Impact:** GNNs can capture higher-order connectivity patterns and highlight stealthy lateral movements.

1. **Ensemble Anomaly Detection**
   * **Objective:** Combine Isolation Forest, One-Class SVM, and Autoencoders to improve detection of both point and collective anomalies.
   * **Approach:**

from sklearn.ensemble import IsolationForest

from sklearn.svm import OneClassSVM

# Fit each and then vote or stack their binary outputs

* + **Impact:** A heterogeneous ensemble reduces false positives and increases true positive rates.

1. **Feature Sensitivity & Explainability**
   * **Objective:** Use SHAP or LIME to uncover which features (e.g., Packet Length, Severity Level, Anomaly Scores) most influence model decisions.
   * **Approach:**

explainer = shap.TreeExplainer(rf\_model)

shap\_values= explainer.shap\_values(X\_test)

shap.summary\_plot(shap\_values, X\_test)

* + **Impact:** Prioritizing and refining key features leads to leaner, more interpretable models and better operator trust.

**How to Improve the Pipeline**

1. **Model Upgrades**
   * **Switch to Gradient Boosting (XGBoost/LightGBM):**

from xgboost import XGBClassifier

pipeline = Pipeline([

('preproc', preprocessor),

('clf', XGBClassifier(eval\_metric='mlogloss', use\_label\_encoder=False))

])

*Expected Benefit:* Faster training, built-in handling of missing values, and often higher accuracy on structured security data.

* + **Incorporate Deep Learning:** Train a small feed-forward or Transformer-based network on the enriched feature set for greater capacity to learn complex interactions.

1. **Refined Segmentation**
   * **Dynamic Segments:** Instead of A/B/C, create segments by traffic type (HTTP, DNS, FTP, Control) and combined severity/attack type (e.g., “High-DDoS”).
   * **Specialist Models per Segment:** Fit a dedicated anomaly detector or classifier for each refined segment to capture its unique behavior.
2. **Modular, Microservice-Style Architecture**
   * **Data Ingestion & Cleaning Service**
   * **Exploratory Analysis & Visualization Service**
   * **Feature Engineering Service**
   * **Model Training & Scoring Service**
   * Decoupling allows independent scaling, testing, and redeployment.
3. **Federated Learning Across Network Zones**
   * **Use Case:** If logs are siloed per DMZ, internal LAN, or cloud VPC, train local models and aggregate updates without sharing raw data.
   * **Framework:** TensorFlow Federated or PySyft.
4. **Real-Time Streaming & Alert Prioritization**
   * **Streaming Tools:** Kafka + Spark Streaming or Flink for low-latency feature computation and model scoring per incoming packet.
   * **Smart Alert Router:** Combine anomaly score, volume burstiness, and host reputation into a single risk score and only notify on high-risk events.
5. **Automated Threat Intelligence Integration**
   * Ingest external IoCs (blacklists, CVE feeds) and enrich your dataset in real time to catch known bad actors earlier.
   * Prioritize alerts by overlap with external threat feeds.

**Summary**

* **Next Steps:** We will expand temporal drift analysis, apply advanced NLP to payloads, and employ GNNs for relational insights.
* **Improvements:** Adopting stronger learners (XGBoost/GNN), refining segmentation, moving to modular microservices, and enabling federated, real-time detection will significantly boost our detection capabilities.
* **Long-Term Vision:** A continuously learning, explainable, and scalable cybersecurity pipeline that adapts to new threats, minimizes false alarms, and provides security teams with the right insights at the right time.