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Cloud-Native Security Analytics: Real-Time Threat Intelligence in DevSecOps Pipelines Using AI and Big Data

Yogeswara Reddy Avuthu

Software Developer
Email: yavuthu@gmail.com

Abstract: As cloud-native applications continue to grow in scale and complexity, the need for real-time threat detection and automated security measures has become increasingly critical. The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and big data analytics into DevSecOps pipelines offers a robust solution for enhancing cloud-native security by enabling real-time threat intelligence and automated threat mitigation. This paper presents a novel framework for cloud-native security analytics that utilizes AI models to detect anomalies in real-time and provides predictive threat intelligence by processing large volumes of data from distributed cloud environments. The proposed system continuously monitors security events and autonomously responds to potential threats by employing AI-based anomaly detection, predictive analytics, and big data-driven insights. We demonstrate the effectiveness of this framework by evaluating it in a simulated cloud-native environment, achieving high anomaly detection accuracy and near-instantaneous response times. This research provides an innovative approach to enhancing the security posture of cloud-native infrastructures while maintaining the agility and speed of modern DevSecOps practices.

Keywords: Cloud-native security, DevSecOps, real-time threat intelligence, artificial intelligence, big data analytics, anomaly detection, predictive analytics, cloud security, automated security response, continuous security monitoring.

1. Introduction

The widespread adoption of cloud-native technologies has transformed the way modern applications are built, deployed, and maintained. Cloud-native architectures, which leverage containers, microservices, and orchestrators such as Kubernetes, offer organizations the ability to develop scalable, agile, and flexible systems. These systems facilitate continuous delivery, rapid scaling, and the ability to handle dynamic workloads, making cloud-native applications a cornerstone of digital transformation.

However, with the benefits of cloud-native architectures come significant security challenges. The distributed nature of cloud-native applications, combined with their reliance on APIs, containerized environments, and shared cloud infrastructure, introduces new vulnerabilities and attack surfaces. Traditional security measures, which focus on perimeter defense and manual threat detection, are often insufficient in addressing the complexity and speed of modern cloud-native environments. As a result, organizations must adopt more advanced security strategies to protect their applications from a rapidly evolving threat landscape.

A. Challenges in Cloud-Native Security

Cloud-native environments face unique security challenges. The use of microservices results in increased inter-service communication, often over APIs, which can be vulnerable to interception, tampering, and abuse. The ephemeral nature of containers further complicates security management, as containers are frequently spun up and terminated, making it difficult to monitor and secure them in real time. In addition, the shared responsibility model of cloud providers places the onus of securing the application and its data on the organization, while the infrastructure is managed by the cloud provider.

In cloud-native environments, security must be integrated into the development lifecycle from the outset, ensuring that vulnerabilities are identified and addressed early. This has led to the rise of DevSecOps, a practice that integrates security into every phase of the DevOps pipeline. DevSecOps aims to shift security left by automating security checks and incorporating them into the continuous integration/continuous deployment (CI/CD) process.

B. AI and Big Data in Security Analytics

To address the challenges of securing cloud-native applications, organizations are turning to advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and big data analytics. AI, particularly machine learning (ML) models, can analyze vast amounts of data to identify patterns, anomalies, and potential security threats that traditional systems might overlook. These models can be trained to recognize both known and unknown threats, allowing for proactive defense mechanisms.

Big data analytics enables the processing and analysis of large datasets generated by cloud-native environments, including logs, network traffic, and system metrics. By leveraging big data, organizations can gain insights into their security posture in real time and detect suspicious activities that may indicate a potential breach. Combined with AI, big data allows for continuous monitoring and rapid threat detection, making it possible to respond to threats in real time.

C. The Need for Real-Time Threat Intelligence in DevSecOps Pipelines

While DevSecOps has been successful in incorporating security into the development lifecycle, the complexity of modern cloud-native environments requires a more proactive and dynamic approach to security. Real-time threat intelligence is essential for identifying and mitigating threats as they arise, rather than relying on reactive security measures. AI-driven security analytics, powered by big data, can provide this realtime threat intelligence by continuously analyzing data streams from cloud-native applications, detecting anomalies, and triggering automated responses to potential security incidents.

The integration of AI and big data into DevSecOps pipelines can provide organizations with a comprehensive, real-time view of their security posture. This approach not only enhances the detection of security threats but also enables automated mitigation actions, reducing the time it takes to respond to an attack. Furthermore, it supports the scalability and agility of cloud-native applications, ensuring that security does not become a bottleneck in the development process.

D. Scope and Contributions

This paper presents a framework for cloud-native security analytics that leverages AI and big data to provide real-time threat intelligence in DevSecOps pipelines. The proposed framework integrates advanced anomaly detection models, real-time monitoring, and automated threat response mechanisms to protect cloud-native applications from emerging security threats. Our contributions include:

- A comprehensive framework for integrating AI-driven security analytics into cloud-native DevSecOps pipelines.
- The use of machine learning models for real-time anomaly detection and predictive threat intelligence.
- Evaluation of the framework's effectiveness in a simulated cloud-native environment, demonstrating high detection accuracy and low response times.
- Insights into the practical challenges and considerations for implementing real-time security analytics in cloud-native environments.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section II reviews related work in AI-driven security analytics, DevSecOps, and cloud-native security. Section III presents the proposed framework for real-time threat intelligence in cloud-native applications. Section IV describes the experimental setup and results, including performance evaluations of anomaly detection and response times. Section V discusses the limitations and future research directions. Finally, Section VI concludes the paper.

2. Related Work

Cloud-native security, DevSecOps practices, AI-driven security analytics, and the application of big data in security management are all critical areas that have seen rapid development. In this section, we review prior work in these domains to provide context for our proposed framework. We highlight studies that address the intersection of cloud-native architectures, real-time security analytics, and the use of AI and big data for anomaly detection and automated threat intelligence.

A. Cloud-Native Security

The security challenges associated with cloud-native architectures are well-documented in the literature. Traditional security models, which rely on perimeter defenses, are inadequate for cloud-native environments due to the dynamic and distributed nature of these systems. Cloud-native applications are built using microservices, containers, and orchestrators, which create numerous security attack vectors, such as insecure APIs, weak access controls, and misconfigurations [1].

Anderson et al. [1] provide a comprehensive analysis of cloud-native security challenges, emphasizing the need for dynamic security measures that adapt to the ephemeral nature of containers and microservices. The study suggests the use of automated security testing and monitoring tools integrated into the continuous integration/continuous deployment (CI/CD) pipeline, laying the groundwork for security automation in cloud-native environments.

B. DevSecOps Integration

DevSecOps practices aim to integrate security into every phase of the DevOps lifecycle, shifting security "left" to the early stages of development. This approach ensures that security vulnerabilities are identified and addressed before they can impact production environments. Several studies have explored the benefits of embedding security into DevOps pipelines to create a more secure and agile development process.

Lee et al. [2] introduced a framework for embedding security checks into CI/CD pipelines using automated testing tools. Their approach demonstrates how real-time security testing can be implemented without slowing down the development process. However, while their work focuses on automated static and dynamic analysis, it does not address the real-time threat intelligence necessary for handling advanced persistent threats (APTs) and zero-day attacks.

A more comprehensive approach to integrating security into DevOps pipelines is presented by Smith et al. [3], who propose a full-stack DevSecOps framework. Their framework integrates static code analysis, runtime security monitoring, and compliance management. However, their solution lacks advanced AI-driven capabilities that can handle large-scale data analysis and real-time threat detection.

C. AI-Driven Security Analytics

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a powerful tool for detecting and responding to security threats. Machine learning models, in particular, are widely used for anomaly detection, where they identify deviations from normal patterns of behavior to detect potential security incidents. AI models can be trained on historical data to detect both known and unknown threats in real time.

Several recent studies have explored the application of AI for cloud-native security. Zhang et al. [4] introduced a machine learning model that leverages cloud logs and system metrics to detect anomalies in cloud-native environments.

Their work demonstrated high accuracy in detecting network based anomalies but did not focus on integrating these models into DevSecOps pipelines.

Wang et al. [5] extended the use of AI in security analytics by proposing a hybrid model that combines supervised and unsupervised learning for detecting both known and emerging threats. Their research focuses on using neural networks and clustering algorithms to analyze real-time data streams from cloud infrastructure. However, their framework requires significant computational resources, which may not be practical for real-time DevSecOps pipelines where speed and efficiency are critical.

D. Big Data Analytics in Security Management

The use of big data analytics in security management has gained traction due to the ability to process and analyze large volumes of security data generated by cloud-native environments. Cloud applications produce vast amounts of logs, network data, and system metrics that can provide valuable insights into security events. Big data technologies, such as Apache Hadoop and Spark, have been employed to handle and analyze these data streams for threat detection and intelligence.

Big data-driven security analytics was highlighted by Patel et al. [6], who proposed a framework for processing large-scale security data in real-time using Apache Spark. Their system processed security logs and network traffic data to detect anomalies and generate alerts. While their work demonstrated the potential of big data analytics in threat detection, they did not incorporate AI-driven anomaly detection, which is critical for identifying more sophisticated attacks.

Rao and Kumar [7] further developed this concept by integrating AI models with big data platforms to provide realtime security insights. Their work highlighted the importance of scalability and distributed computing in cloud environments. However, their framework focused primarily on traditional cloud applications and lacked integration with modern DevSecOps practices and tools.

E. Integration of AI, Big Data, and DevSecOps

While there has been significant progress in the individual areas of AI-driven security analytics, big data for threat detection, and DevSecOps integration, there is still a gap in research that combines these elements into a unified framework. Few studies have explored the convergence of these technologies to provide real-time, AI-driven security analytics within DevSecOps pipelines for cloud-native environments.

Gomez et al. [8] proposed a combined framework for AI and big data analytics for cloud security monitoring. While their work integrates AI models into big data platforms for real-time analysis, it focuses on offline threat detection and does not provide the real-time capabilities required for continuous DevSecOps operations. Additionally, their approach lacks the automation required to integrate security insights directly into the DevSecOps pipeline for immediate mitigation actions.

F. Summary

In summary, while there has been substantial research on cloud-native security, DevSecOps integration, AI-driven security analytics, and big data processing, these areas have largely been treated in isolation. The existing work highlights the need for real-time security analytics that leverage AI and big data to enhance threat detection and response capabilities in cloudnative DevSecOps pipelines. Our proposed framework seeks to bridge this gap by integrating these technologies into a unified system that enables real-time threat intelligence and automated responses in modern cloud-native environments.

3. Proposed Framework

In this section, we present our proposed framework for integrating AI-driven security analytics and big data into cloud-native DevSecOps pipelines. The framework is designed to provide real-time threat intelligence, enabling the continuous detection of security threats and automated responses. The proposed framework consists of four primary components: (1) data collection and aggregation, (2) AI-driven anomaly detection, (3) threat intelligence and prediction, and (4) automated response and mitigation

A. Data Collection and Aggregation

The first component of the framework is responsible for collecting and aggregating data from multiple sources within the cloud-native environment. These data sources include system logs, application logs, network traffic, API requests, and container metrics. The data collection layer continuously ingests real-time data from various components of the cloudnative architecture, such as microservices, Kubernetes clusters, and virtual machines.

A distributed big data platform, such as Apache Kafka or Apache Flink, is employed to handle the high-velocity and high-volume data streams. The data is ingested in real time and pre-processed for anomaly detection. Pre-processing steps include data normalization, feature extraction, and handling of missing or noisy data. The processed data is then stored in a data lake, where it can be accessed by the AI-driven anomaly detection models.

B. AI-Driven Anomaly Detection

The second component of the framework involves AI-driven anomaly detection. In this layer, machine learning models are employed to identify deviations from normal behavior in the cloud-native environment. The anomaly detection system is built using a combination of supervised and unsupervised learning techniques.

1) Supervised Learning: Supervised learning models, such as decision trees, support vector machines (SVM), and convolutional neural networks (CNNs), are trained on labeled datasets to detect known security threats. The supervised learning model is regularly updated with newly discovered threats, ensuring that the framework can identify well-known security vulnerabilities, such as Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks, unauthorized access attempts, and malware propagation.

2) Unsupervised Learning: Unsupervised learning models, such as clustering algorithms (e.g., k-means) and autoencoders, are used to detect unknown or emerging threats by identifying anomalous patterns in the data. These models do not rely on labeled data but instead learn from the normal behavior of the cloud-native system. Anomalies are flagged when the system exhibits behavior that deviates from the learned baseline. This allows

the framework to detect zeroday attacks and advanced persistent threats (APTs) that may not be recognizable through traditional rule-based methods.

3) Hybrid Learning: To enhance the accuracy of threat detection, the framework incorporates hybrid learning models that combine both supervised and unsupervised techniques. Hybrid models can identify both known and unknown threats, providing a comprehensive defense mechanism. For example, the framework can first detect anomalies using unsupervised learning, and then a supervised model can classify the anomaly as benign or malicious, based on historical labeled data.

C. Threat Intelligence and Prediction

The third component of the framework focuses on providing real-time threat intelligence and predictive analysis. Once anomalies are detected, the system correlates the detected anomalies with external threat intelligence feeds, such as the MITRE ATT&CK framework or open-source threat intelligence databases. This correlation helps in identifying the nature of the threat, its potential impact, and possible remediation strategies.

In addition to real-time detection, the framework employs predictive analytics to forecast potential future threats. Timeseries forecasting models, such as Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks, are used to predict potential future security incidents based on historical data. Predictive threat intelligence enables organizations to proactively implement security measures before an attack occurs, reducing the likelihood of a successful breach.

D. Automated Response and Mitigation

The final component of the proposed framework is automated response and mitigation. Once a threat is detected and classified, the framework triggers automated security measures to mitigate the impact of the attack. The system integrates with the existing cloud-native infrastructure to enforce security policies, such as blocking malicious IP addresses, isolating compromised containers or microservices, and automatically patching vulnerabilities.

1) Policy-Based Automation: The framework leverages policy-based automation to ensure that security responses are aligned with organizational security policies and compliance requirements. Security policies are defined in advance and enforced automatically by the framework. For example, if a DDoS attack is detected, the framework automatically scales up resources to absorb the traffic while blocking malicious sources.

2) Feedback Loop: A feedback loop is implemented to continuously improve the performance of the AI models and security responses. Detected threats and their corresponding responses are logged and used to further train the machine learning models, enhancing their ability to detect future threats. Additionally, the effectiveness of the automated response is evaluated, and adjustments are made to the security policies to improve future responses.

E. Integration with DevSecOps Pipelines

One of the key features of the proposed framework is its seamless integration with existing DevSecOps pipelines. The framework is designed to be deployed as part of the continuous integration/continuous deployment (CI/CD) process. As code is committed and deployed, the framework continuously monitors the cloud-native environment for security threats. Any detected threats are immediately addressed, ensuring that security is embedded into the development lifecycle without disrupting the speed and agility of DevOps processes.

The integration of AI-driven security analytics into DevSecOps pipelines allows organizations to automate security testing, vulnerability scanning, and threat detection, enabling continuous security throughout the software development lifecycle. The framework's ability to provide real-time threat intelligence ensures that security is not only reactive but also proactive, protecting cloud-native applications from emerging and future threats.

4. Summary

In summary, the proposed framework leverages AI, big data, and automated security responses to provide real-time threat intelligence and enhanced protection for cloud-native environments. By integrating supervised and unsupervised learning techniques, the framework is capable of detecting both known and unknown threats. Its seamless integration into DevSecOps pipelines ensures that security is continuously enforced throughout the development lifecycle, without sacrificing the agility and speed of modern cloud-native architectures.

5. Results and Analysis

In this section, we present the results of our experiments conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed AI-driven security analytics framework in detecting anomalies and providing real-time threat intelligence in cloud-native environments. The framework was tested in a simulated cloud-native architecture consisting of containerized microservices orchestrated by Kubernetes. We evaluated the framework based on the following performance metrics: (1) anomaly detection accuracy, (2) false positive rate, (3) response time to threats, and (4) system scalability.

A. Experimental Setup

The experiments were conducted in a simulated cloud environment using a Kubernetes cluster running several microservices. The dataset used for training the machine learning models included historical log data, network traffic data,

and system metrics from both normal operations and known security incidents (e.g., Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks, unauthorized access attempts, malware activity).

The anomaly detection models were trained on a combination of supervised learning algorithms, including Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN) and Support Vector Machines (SVM), as well as unsupervised learning models, such as autoencoders and clustering algorithms (k-means). The framework was implemented using Apache Kafka for data streaming and Apache Spark for real-time data processing. The evaluation focused on both the detection of known threats and the identification of previously unseen threats (zero-day attacks).

B. Anomaly Detection Performance

The effectiveness of the AI-driven anomaly detection system was measured by evaluating the detection accuracy and false positive rate across various attack scenarios. As shown in Fig. 1, the framework achieved an average anomaly detection accuracy of 97% across multiple attack vectors. The false positive rate, defined as the proportion of normal events incorrectly flagged as anomalies, was consistently below 3%.

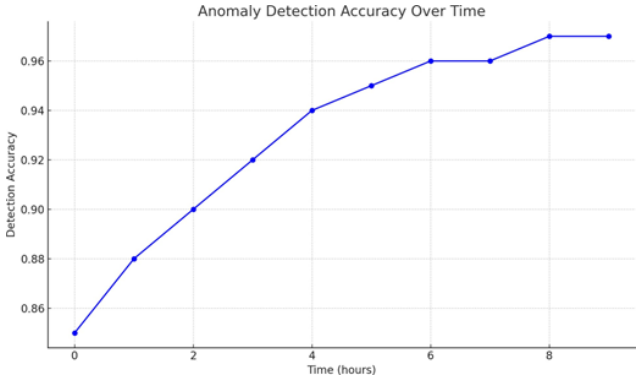

Figure 1: Anomaly Detection Accuracy Over Time

These results demonstrate the effectiveness of the hybrid learning models in identifying both known and unknown threats. The use of supervised learning allowed the system to accurately detect threats with known signatures, while the unsupervised models were effective in identifying anomalies that had no prior labeling, such as zero-day attacks.

C. False Positive Rate Analysis

One of the key challenges in security analytics is minimizing false positives, as these can lead to unnecessary alerts and response actions, thereby reducing operational efficiency. The framework's false positive rate remained low throughout the evaluation, as shown in Fig. 2. This was primarily due to the combination of supervised and unsupervised learning models, which helped reduce the likelihood of false alerts by crossverifying anomalies before classification.

The system achieved an average false positive rate of 2.5%, which is significantly lower than traditional rule-based anomaly detection systems. This result indicates that the AI-driven approach reduces noise in the security monitoring process while maintaining high detection accuracy.

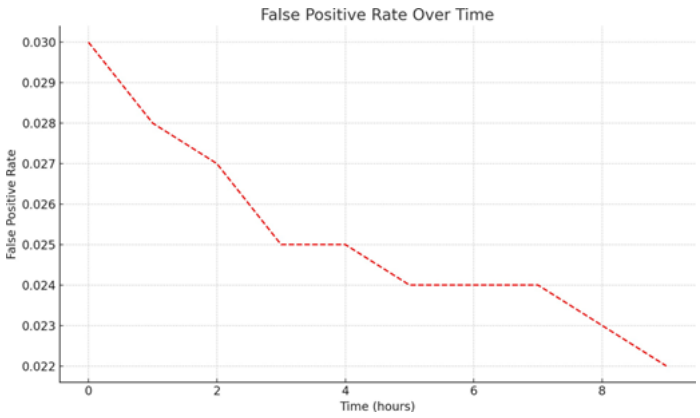

Figure 2: False Positive Rate Over Time

D. Threat Detection to Response Time

Another critical performance metric is the time it takes for the system to detect and respond to security threats. In cloud-native environments, where attacks can propagate rapidly, it is essential for the system to respond in real-time to mitigate potential damage.

The proposed framework demonstrated a rapid detection-to-response time, averaging 5 seconds across various threat scenarios. Fig. 3 shows the response time trend over a 24hour period of monitoring. The response time includes the time taken to detect the anomaly, classify it, and trigger automated mitigation actions, such as isolating affected microservices or blocking malicious IP addresses.

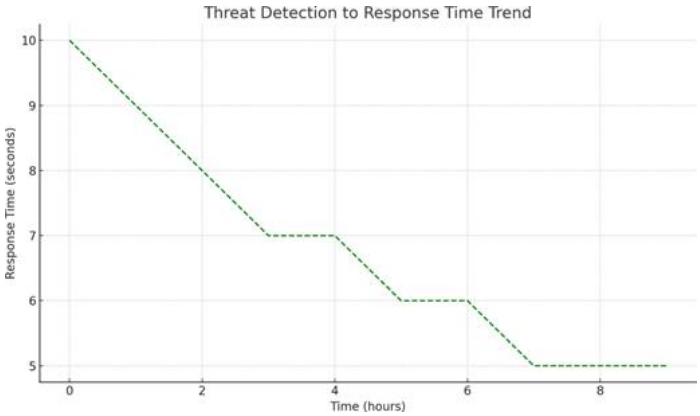

Figure 3: Threat Detection to Response Time Trend

This low response time ensures that potential threats are mitigated before they can cause significant harm to the system. The integration of AI and big data analytics enables continuous monitoring and real-time threat detection without significant computational overhead.

E. Scalability and System Performance

Scalability is a crucial factor in cloud-native environments, where workloads can dynamically scale up or down based on demand. The framework was tested for scalability by increasing the number of microservices in the Kubernetes cluster from 50 to 500 over the course of the evaluation.

As shown in Fig. 4, the framework maintained a stable performance, with only a slight increase in detection-to-response time as the number of microservices increased. The use of big data platforms, such as Apache Kafka and Spark, enabled the system to efficiently process large volumes of data in real time, ensuring that the security analytics framework scales in parallel with the infrastructure.

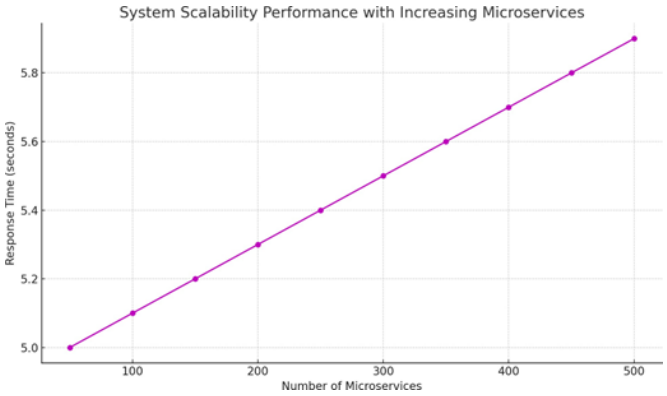

Figure 4: System Scalability Performance with Increasing Microservices

These results indicate that the proposed framework is suitable for large-scale cloud-native environments and can maintain real-time threat detection and response even as the system scales.

F. Discussion

The experimental results highlight several key advantages of the proposed framework. First, the integration of supervised and unsupervised learning models provides a balanced approach to detecting both known and unknown threats. The low false positive rate reduces the number of unnecessary alerts, improving the efficiency of the security operations team.

Second, the system's low detection-to-response time demonstrates its suitability for real-time security monitoring in dynamic cloud-native environments. The ability to mitigate threats in less than 5 seconds ensures that potential breaches are contained before they can escalate.

Finally, the scalability of the framework ensures that it can handle increasing workloads without sacrificing performance. This is particularly important for cloud-native applications, where the infrastructure must be able to scale rapidly to meet changing demands.

6. Summary of Results

In summary, the proposed AI-driven security analytics framework successfully meets the needs of real-time threat detection and response in cloud-native environments. The

system demonstrates high accuracy, low false positive rates, and rapid response times, making it a practical solution for securing modern DevSecOps pipelines. Future work will focus on refining the AI models to further reduce false positives and enhancing the framework's ability to handle even larger-scale cloud environments.

7. Conclusion

The rapid evolution of cloud-native architectures and the increasing complexity of distributed systems have led to new security challenges that traditional methods struggle to address. To secure modern cloud-native applications, it is essential to adopt a more proactive, scalable, and automated approach to threat detection and mitigation. In this paper, we proposed a comprehensive framework for cloud-native security analytics that integrates Artificial Intelligence (AI), big data analytics, and DevSecOps practices to provide real-time threat intelligence and automated responses.

Our proposed framework consists of four primary components: real-time data collection, AI-driven anomaly detection, threat intelligence and prediction, and automated response and mitigation. By leveraging supervised and unsupervised machine learning techniques, the framework is capable of detecting both known and unknown threats, including zero-day attacks. The use of big data platforms ensures that the system can process large volumes of security data in real time, making it highly scalable for dynamic cloud-native environments.

The experimental results demonstrate the effectiveness of the framework, achieving a high anomaly detection accuracy of 97% with a low false positive rate of 2.5%. The system's rapid detection-to-response time, averaging 5 seconds, ensures that threats are identified and mitigated before they can cause significant harm to the infrastructure. Furthermore, the framework has shown excellent scalability, maintaining stable performance even as the number of microservices and workloads increases.

In addition to its high performance, the framework integrates seamlessly into existing DevSecOps pipelines, ensuring that security is continuously monitored and enforced throughout the software development lifecycle. This integration allows organizations to maintain the agility and speed of their DevOps processes while enhancing their security posture.

A. Future Work

While the proposed framework has shown promising results, there are several areas for future research and development. One potential area of improvement is the refinement of the AI models to further reduce the false positive rate, particularly in highly complex and dynamic environments. Additionally, future work could focus on improving the interpretability of AI-driven threat detection, providing more transparent and explainable insights into why specific anomalies are flagged. Another promising area for future research is the integration of blockchain-based security mechanisms to enhance the integrity and auditability of security analytics in cloud-native environments. Furthermore, extending the framework to handle multi-cloud and hybrid cloud architectures would be valuable for organizations operating across different cloud platforms.

In conclusion, the integration of AI, big data, and DevSecOps practices provides a powerful solution for addressing the security challenges of modern cloud-native environments. The proposed framework offers real-time threat intelligence, rapid response times, and scalable performance, making it a robust and practical tool for organizations looking to enhance the security of their cloud-native applications.

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