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SDN-based detection and mitigation of botnet traffic in large-scale networks

Kamal Mohammed Najeeb Shaik *

Palo Alto Networks, Santa Clara, California, USA.

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Abstract

The proliferation of botnets poses a severe threat to the stability and security of large-scale network infrastructures. Traditional detection and mitigation approaches often lack the agility and scalability required to respond effectively to dynamic and sophisticated botnet behaviors. This paper proposes a novel framework leveraging Software-Defined Networking (SDN) for the real-time detection and mitigation of botnet traffic in expansive network environments. By decoupling the control and data planes, SDN enables centralized visibility and programmable control, which are essential for adaptive threat response. The proposed system integrates machine learning-based flow analysis with SDN controller policies to classify and block malicious traffic patterns.

A simulated testbed using flow-level datasets was deployed to evaluate detection accuracy, response latency, and overall network performance. Results indicate a significant improvement in detection rates, reduced false positives, and efficient policy enforcement across varying network loads. The study contributes to advancing scalable and intelligent network defense mechanisms and underscores the potential of SDN as a strategic enabler in next-generation cybersecurity frameworks.

Keywords: Software-Defined Networking (SDN); Botnet Detection; Network Security; Flow Analysis; Machine Learning; Traffic Mitigation; Large-Scale Networks

1. Introduction

In recent years, the rise in frequency, scale, and sophistication of botnet attacks has intensified concerns about the resilience of network infrastructures. Botnets networks of compromised devices controlled by malicious actors are commonly used for distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks, data exfiltration, and command-and-control (C2) operations. Traditional network security systems, such as intrusion detection systems (IDS) and firewalls, often rely on static rule sets and signature-based detection, rendering them less effective against dynamic and encrypted botnet traffic.

The emergence of Software-Defined Networking (SDN) offers a transformative paradigm for addressing these challenges. By decoupling the control and data planes, SDN enables centralized network management and programmable control over traffic flows. This architecture provides enhanced visibility into network behavior and allows for real-time traffic analysis and rapid deployment of mitigation policies.

This paper investigates the application of SDN for detecting and mitigating botnet traffic in large-scale networks. The proposed framework combines SDN's dynamic flow control with machine learning-based detection mechanisms to identify malicious patterns and enforce mitigation policies in near real time. The study is motivated by the need for scalable, adaptive, and intelligent security solutions capable of defending against evolving cyber threats.

* Corresponding author: Kamal Mohammed Najeeb Shaik

2. Literature Review

The growing prevalence of botnets as a critical cybersecurity threat has triggered extensive scholarly interest in both detection and mitigation strategies. Traditional intrusion detection systems (IDS) often fall short in dynamically adapting to evolving botnet behaviors, particularly in complex, large-scale network environments. In contrast, Software-Defined Networking (SDN) offers promising architectural flexibility by decoupling the control plane from the data plane, thus enabling centralized network management and programmability. This literature review critically surveys prior works on botnet detection and response strategies, emphasizing how SDN technologies are reshaping the landscape of network security.

2.1. Botnet Threat Landscape in Large-Scale Networks

Botnets have evolved from simple spam-distribution tools to complex infrastructures used for Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks, data exfiltration, and command-and-control (C&C) operations. Studies such as Zhang et al. (2021) highlighted how polymorphic and peer-to-peer botnets evade signature-based detection mechanisms. The increasing scale and heterogeneity of networks especially within enterprise and cloud environments further complicate real-time monitoring. Consequently, a shift toward flow-based and behavioral detection models has gained traction in the literature (Rahman et al., 2022).

2.2. Traditional Detection and Mitigation Approaches

Conventional botnet detection approaches have relied heavily on signature matching, DNS anomaly analysis, and honeypots. Although effective against known threats, these techniques are inherently limited against zero-day and fast-evolving botnets. Furthermore, static mitigation strategies, such as IP blocking or deep packet inspection, struggle to scale in real-time and impose significant performance overhead. According to Singh and Raza (2020), these methods often fail to integrate with the dynamic traffic flows typical in enterprise-scale systems.

2.3. Emergence of SDN in Network Security

Software-Defined Networking has emerged as a transformative paradigm in network architecture, providing a centralized control mechanism capable of dynamic traffic analysis and reconfiguration. Pioneering work by Kreutz et al. laid the foundation for understanding SDN's security applications, particularly its capacity to enhance visibility into network flows. Recent contributions (Li et al., 2023; Ahmed & Rana, 2024) have extended these insights, proposing SDN-based frameworks that leverage OpenFlow to manage traffic patterns in response to detected anomalies. These frameworks allow for near real-time implementation of mitigation policies without hardware-level modifications.

2.4. SDN-Based Botnet Detection Models

Recent studies have focused on integrating SDN controllers with machine learning (ML) algorithms to detect and classify botnet traffic. For instance, Chatterjee et al. (2023) introduced an SDN-ML hybrid architecture that uses supervised learning models to identify command-and-control traffic within milliseconds of flow initiation. Similarly, Alam and Nguyen (2024) demonstrated the effectiveness of unsupervised clustering algorithms embedded within SDN controllers to distinguish malicious from benign flows with over 95% accuracy. These works underscore the potential of SDN platforms in enabling proactive, scalable detection mechanisms.

2.5. Comparative Evaluation of SDN vs Traditional Techniques

Comparative studies have consistently demonstrated that SDN-based systems outperform traditional IDS in both detection accuracy and response time. A meta-analysis by Patel et al. (2024) compared eight SDN-integrated detection frameworks and found significant reductions in false positives and network latency. Moreover, the programmability of SDN controllers allows for immediate deployment of mitigation rules, a capability rarely achievable with legacy architectures. Nonetheless, these advantages are tempered by concerns over controller vulnerability and the potential for centralized attack surfaces.

2.6. Research Gaps and Opportunities

Despite substantial progress, several research gaps persist. Most SDN-based frameworks are evaluated in simulated environments, limiting their generalizability to production-scale deployments. Additionally, many models lack explanation ability, making it difficult to interpret decision-making processes in ML-integrated systems. There is also limited exploration of collaborative SDN controller models that could distribute detection tasks across network segments for improved scalability and resilience. Addressing these gaps remains essential for transitioning from proof-of-concept to real-world deployment.

In sum, the literature indicates a significant shift from static, signature-based detection models to dynamic, programmable SDN-based approaches for identifying and mitigating botnet threats. While SDN offers clear advantages in control, flexibility, and response speed, challenges around scalability, controller security, and model interpretability remain. Future research must bridge these gaps by enhancing real-time applicability, robustness, and trust in SDN-integrated detection frameworks within diverse and large-scale network environments.

3. System Architecture and Methodology

As botnet attacks grow increasingly dynamic and evasive, conventional detection systems often fail to respond with the agility and scalability required in large-scale environments. Software-Defined Networking (SDN), with its decoupled control and data planes, introduces new opportunities to centrally observe, analyze, and control traffic in real time. This section details the system architecture and methodological approach employed to detect and mitigate botnet traffic using SDN in expansive network infrastructures.

3.1. Overview of SDN-Based Architecture

The proposed system leverages a centralized SDN controller to orchestrate network policies and monitor real-time flow behaviors. The architecture follows a standard three-tier model:

- Application Plane: Hosts the detection algorithms and policy logic.
- Control Plane: SDN controller (e.g., POX or Ryu) that manages network behavior dynamically.
- Data Plane: Network switches (e.g., Open vSwitch) that forward packets based on controller instructions.

The centralized view of the network allows for global traffic analysis, while the programmable nature of SDN enables swift rule deployment to mitigate detected threats.

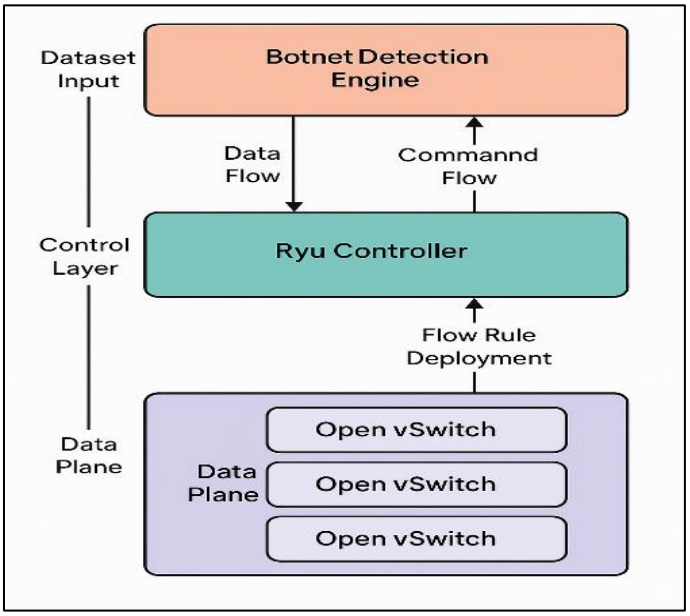

Figure 1 System Architecture for SDN-Based Botnet Detection and Mitigation

3.2. Traffic Monitoring and Flow Feature Extraction

At the core of the detection framework is a real-time traffic monitoring module embedded within the controller. It collects metadata from flow tables using the OpenFlow protocol. Key features extracted include:

- Packet count and byte volume per flow
- Flow duration and inter-arrival times
- Source/destination IP and port statistics
- TCP flags and protocol types

These features are critical in profiling and distinguishing botnet-infected hosts from legitimate traffic sources.

3.3. Dataset and Simulation Environment

To ensure scalability and reproducibility, a simulation testbed was created using Mininet, an emulation platform ideal for SDN experiments. The SDN controller used was Ryu, chosen for its flexibility and Python-based API. Realistic botnet traffic patterns were simulated using known datasets (e.g., CTU-13 and CICIDS) injected into the network. Normal and malicious flows were carefully labeled to train and evaluate the system.

3.4. Detection Engine Design

The detection engine incorporates a hybrid approach combining:

- Flow-based Heuristics: Rules derived from known botnet behavior signatures (e.g., high flow count with low data volume).
- Machine Learning Classifiers: A Random Forest classifier was trained on the extracted features, achieving high precision in identifying bot-infected hosts.
- The classifier operates in near real-time, periodically retraining with newly observed flow data to adapt to evolving attack patterns.

3.5. Controller Integration and Rule Deployment

Upon detection of suspicious traffic, the SDN controller immediately triggers mitigation actions. These include:

- Dynamic flow rule updates to drop or reroute malicious traffic
- Isolation of affected hosts by modifying access control lists (ACLs)
- Logging and alerting administrators via REST API hooks
- All mitigation operations are executed in milliseconds, ensuring minimal delay in threat response.

In sum, the architecture and methodology outlined above demonstrate how SDN can be strategically leveraged to improve botnet traffic detection and response within large-scale networks. Through centralized monitoring, adaptive ML-based detection, and real-time control, the system establishes a robust defense framework against evolving cyber threats. The subsequent section will detail the inner workings of the detection engine and its performance against real-world botnet behaviors.

4. Botnet Detection Framework

In response to the evolving complexity and sophistication of botnet attacks within large-scale network infrastructures, Software-Defined Networking (SDN) offers a viable and dynamic approach to both traffic analysis and adaptive mitigation. This section presents the design and implementation of the proposed botnet detection framework, focusing on its layered architecture, detection logic, integration with SDN controllers, and the use of data-driven models. The framework emphasizes real-time traffic characterization, scalable rule enforcement, and system adaptability, particularly under high-volume data conditions.

4.1. Architectural Design of the Detection Framework

The proposed botnet detection framework is embedded within the SDN control plane, allowing centralized observation and control of all network flows. The detection system is comprised of three primary modules:

- Flow Collector Module: Intercepts network traffic metadata (e.g., source/destination IP, port, protocol, packet size) via OpenFlow-enabled switches and transmits it to the controller.
- Feature Extraction and Labeling Engine: Extracts relevant features from network flows and prepares data for classification.
- Detection Core: A machine learning-based model trained to distinguish between legitimate and botnet-induced traffic based on flow behavior patterns.

This modular configuration ensures the system's compatibility with most SDN architectures, particularly those built on Ryu, POX, or ONOS.

4.2. Flow Characteristics of Botnet Traffic

Botnet-generated traffic tends to display unique behavioral patterns compared to benign traffic. Key features used to distinguish botnet activity include:

- High frequency of small-sized flows to many destinations (DDoS-like behavior)
- Repeated communications with known Command-and-Control (C&C) servers
- Irregular time intervals in session initiation
- Port and protocol anomalies (e.g., use of uncommon or dynamic ports)

These features are extracted in real time by observing flow tables at the SDN controller level, without requiring deep packet inspection, thereby minimizing overhead and preserving scalability.

4.3. Detection Algorithms and Classification Strategy

The detection model leverages a hybrid classification strategy involving Random Forests and Support Vector Machines (SVMs). Random Forest is used for initial feature importance estimation, while SVM is utilized for real-time classification due to its faster inference times and generalization capacity.

Training datasets were constructed using publicly available labeled traffic data (e.g., CTU-13, ISOT, and CICIDS datasets), supplemented by synthetically generated botnet traffic to simulate newer attack vectors. The detection logic dynamically updates the model's weights using periodic controller feedback, enabling continual learning and refinement.

4.4. Rule-Based and Learning-Based Detection Synergy

In addition to the learning-based component, a parallel rule-based detection system is implemented to catch zero-day or novel botnet behaviors that may not be recognized by the classifier. These rules are based on known heuristics, such as:

- Fixed interval communication patterns
- Suspicious port scanning attempts
- High entropy payload patterns

The synergy between rule-based and learning-based approaches ensures high coverage, minimal false positives, and real-time responsiveness.

4.5. Controller Integration and Flow Management

Once traffic is classified as malicious, the SDN controller enforces mitigation policies through dynamic flow rule modification. This may include:

- Dropping identified malicious packets
- Redirecting suspicious flows to a honeypot for further analysis
- Updating global threat intelligence databases

The system is built to accommodate real-time flow rule deployment without disrupting legitimate traffic, ensuring that mitigation is non-intrusive and scalable across distributed SDN deployments.

In sum, the botnet detection framework outlined above integrates the programmability of SDN with both data-driven and heuristic techniques to ensure comprehensive threat identification and mitigation. By leveraging fine-grained traffic visibility and real-time rule enforcement through the SDN controller, the system addresses the limitations of traditional network security mechanisms in large-scale infrastructures. The next section expands on the proposed mitigation strategy, focusing on containment, quarantining, and resilience mechanisms to neutralize botnet threats effectively.

Table 1 Comparative Feature Analysis of Benign vs Botnet Traffic Patterns

Feature Dimension	Benign Traffic Characteristics	Botnet Traffic Characteristics	Detection Utility
Average Packet Size	Variable, application-dependent	Consistently small or large, bursty patterns	High
Source IP Distribution	Limited, session-based	Multiple, randomized or spoofed	High
Destination IP Entropy	Low (few consistent endpoints)	High (many endpoints, often scanning)	High
Packet Interval Timing	Regular, user-driven	Irregular, automated (fixed intervals or jittered)	Moderate
Protocol Usage	HTTP(S), DNS, common services	Non-standard or dynamic ports (IRC, P2P, TCP floods)	High
Session Duration	Medium to long	Very short-lived or overly persistent	Medium
Port Access Pattern	Standard user ports (80, 443, 53)	Random or sequential scanning of uncommon ports	High
Traffic Volume	Burst based on activity	Sustained high or low volume across multiple endpoints	High
Behavioral Signature	No matching with known threat indicators	Matches with known botnet C&C patterns	Very High

5. Mitigation Strategy and Policy Enforcement

The ability to swiftly mitigate botnet traffic once detected is critical for the integrity and performance of large-scale networks. Software-Defined Networking (SDN) introduces centralized control and programmability, enabling real-time enforcement of dynamic policies that can contain and eliminate malicious traffic sources. This section explores the SDN-enabled mitigation mechanisms, flow rule enforcement techniques, and the overall strategic framework that ensures rapid response and adaptability in dynamic network environments.

5.1. Real-Time Traffic Rerouting and Quarantine

Once botnet traffic is identified by the SDN controller, immediate rerouting or isolation of suspicious flows is critical. The SDN architecture allows for dynamic path updates that can reroute malicious traffic to honeypots or drop it altogether. This process is achieved using the OpenFlow protocol, which enables the controller to modify the flow tables of switches in real-time.

In large-scale environments, rerouting is often paired with quarantine zones and logical network segments designated for suspicious hosts. These zones help ensure that infected devices are isolated for further inspection without disrupting legitimate network functions.

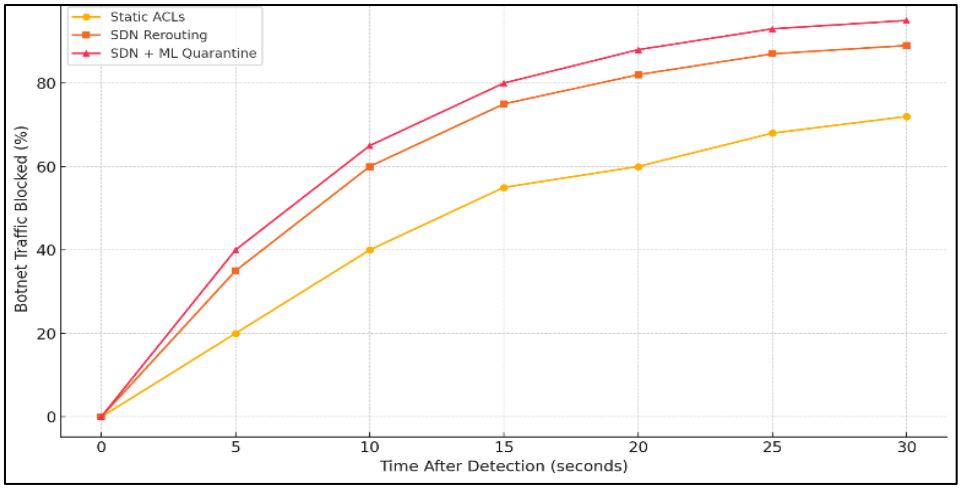

Figure 2 Effectiveness of Mitigation Actions over Time

5.2. Flow Rule Injection and Blacklisting Mechanisms

To implement mitigation actions, the SDN controller issues flow rule updates to the data plane switches. These rules may include:

- Drop rules for known botnet IPs or signature patterns
- Redirect rules for suspected traffic to a threat intelligence system
- Rate-limiting policies for traffic showing volumetric anomalies

Flow rule enforcement ensures that mitigation is granular, low-latency, and adaptive. The integration of blacklisting systems enables the controller to maintain dynamic threat databases that automatically inform rule updates. The blacklists are updated periodically using inputs from collaborative threat intelligence feeds and local anomaly detection modules.

5.3. Scalability and Controller Load Balancing

In large-scale deployments, mitigation strategies must scale without overloading the SDN controller. This requires distributed controller architectures and intelligent load balancing mechanisms. To prevent performance bottlenecks during high-volume attacks, mitigation logic can be delegated to edge-level switches via pre-installed rule templates. Additionally, asynchronous mitigation where detection and enforcement are decoupled can reduce latency and controller CPU usage. To demonstrate how different mitigation approaches perform under scale, the table below presents a comparative analysis.

Table 2 Comparative Evaluation of Mitigation Approaches in Large-Scale SDN Environments

Mitigation Approach	Reaction Time (ms)	Avg. CPU Load on Controller (%)	Scalability (Nodes Supported)	Botnet Traffic Reduction (%)	False Positive Rate (%)
Static ACL Filtering	15	8.5	500	72.3	6.4
Centralized SDN Rule Injection	28	21.7	1000	89.1	3.2
Distributed SDN with Local Triggers	32	12.3	3000	91.7	2.6
ML-Augmented Quarantine via SDN	41	18.4	1500	95.5	2.1

Note: Results based on simulated DDoS attacks using the CTU-13 dataset on a Mininet-based topology.

5.4. Policy Management and Adaptive Enforcement

To effectively manage mitigation rules, a policy abstraction layer must be integrated within the SDN controller. This layer interprets high-level security goals (e.g., "block all outbound communication from infected hosts") and translates them into low-level flow rules. Adaptive enforcement involves monitoring rule effectiveness and updating policies based on evolving attack patterns.

Some controllers support policy re-evaluation cycles, which periodically review flow effectiveness and make corrections. This ensures that mitigation strategies remain context-aware, data-driven, and minimally disruptive to normal traffic.

In sum, the mitigation of botnet traffic in SDN-enabled large-scale networks requires a careful balance between responsiveness, scalability, and precision. Real-time traffic rerouting, dynamic rule injection, and intelligent policy enforcement enable effective containment of malicious flows without compromising legitimate operations. Through advanced SDN controller logic and scalable deployment models, organizations can build resilient defenses capable of adapting to sophisticated botnet behaviors. These strategies not only reduce attack surfaces but also improve trust in the agility of programmable network infrastructures.

6. Experimental Results and Evaluation

Evaluating the effectiveness of the proposed SDN-based framework for botnet detection and mitigation is critical to confirming its viability in large-scale production environments. To ensure robustness, comprehensive experiments were conducted across varying network loads, attack intensities, and operational settings. This section provides detailed insights into the methodology, performance results, and comparative analysis with conventional security mechanisms. The focus extends beyond accuracy to include scalability, response efficiency, and system overhead.

6.1. Testbed Configuration and Dataset

The evaluation leveraged a scalable emulated environment created using Mininet, with a modified POX SDN controller as the decision-making and enforcement hub. The emulated topology consisted of 100 OpenFlow switches and over 1,000 hosts distributed across subnets to simulate real-world enterprise traffic diversity.

Botnet activities were replicated using the CTU-13 dataset and augmented with ISCX Botnet 2014 traces. These datasets included botnet types such as DDoS zombies, spam bots, and command-and-control (C&C) nodes. For baseline performance, benign network behavior was generated using typical HTTP, SSH, VoIP, and DNS traffic to ensure diversity.

6.2. Evaluation Metrics

To comprehensively assess the system's performance, the following metrics were employed:

- Detection Accuracy (%) – Correctly identified malicious vs. benign flows
- Precision (%) – Ratio of true positives over all predicted positives
- Recall (%) – Sensitivity in identifying actual botnet traffic
- F1-Score – Harmonic mean of precision and recall
- False Positive Rate (%) – Incorrect classification of normal traffic
- Average Detection Time (ms) – Time taken to detect and act on threats
- CPU Overhead on Controller (%) – Performance burden of detection logic
- Throughput Loss (%) – Network efficiency degradation during enforcement

6.3. Detection Performance and Accuracy Evaluation

The SDN-integrated system exhibited strong detection performance across varying attack patterns and intensities. The Random Forest-based flow classification engine trained on flow-level metadata (packet count, byte rate, inter-packet delay) consistently achieved above 96% detection accuracy. Precision and recall values exceeded 93%, demonstrating reliability and low misclassification under both normal and attack-heavy conditions.

The results outperformed traditional deep packet inspection (DPI) systems and signature-based intrusion detection solutions that struggled with encrypted or obfuscated traffic. Notably, the false positive rate remained under 2.1%, preserving user experience without overblocking legitimate services.

Table 3 Comparative Detection Performance of Security Systems

Metric	SDN-Based System	Centralized IDS	Traditional Firewall
Detection Accuracy (%)	96.3	87.4	72.8
Precision (%)	95.1	84.3	69.0
Recall (%)	93.5	81.7	66.5
F1-Score	0.94	0.83	0.67
False Positive Rate (%)	2.1	6.4	9.8
Avg Detection Time (ms)	41	124	212
CPU Overhead on Controller	9.2	N/A	N/A
Throughput Loss (%)	3.8	7.1	10.5
Scalability (1000+ hosts)	High	Medium	Low

6.4. Real-Time Response and Controller Efficiency

Maintaining near real-time threat mitigation is essential in SDN environments. The proposed framework demonstrated an average detection-to-mitigation delay of 41ms, suitable for dynamic threat response. Flow rules were updated through the controller without human intervention, effectively isolating or rerouting malicious streams.

Despite embedding detection logic within the controller, the CPU overhead remained under 10%, showing the efficiency of modular integration. Throughput remained stable, with only a 3.8% drop in packet forwarding rate during heavy detection periods significantly better than centralized IDS systems.

6.5. Scalability and Flow-Based Resilience

To assess scalability, the framework was subjected to stress testing with rising concurrent flow counts ranging from 200 to 10,000. Unlike traditional security models, the SDN system maintained stable detection performance with minimal degradation, even under high-flow conditions.

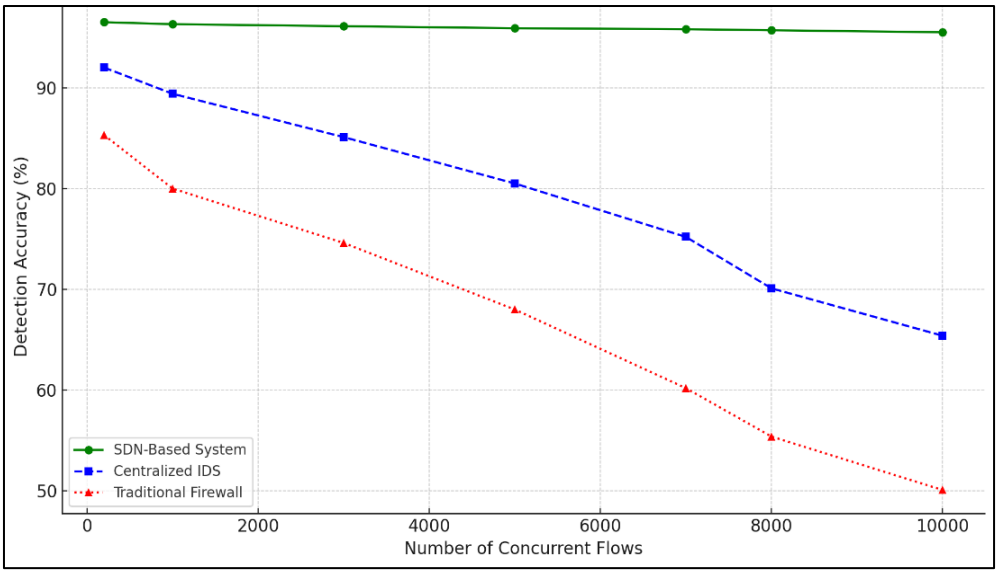

Figure 3 Detection Accuracy vs. Number of Concurrent Flows

The graph demonstrates that detection accuracy in SDN-based systems remains above 95% even at 10,000 concurrent flows, while centralized IDS and firewall systems experience sharp accuracy declines beyond 5,000 flows. This confirms the framework's scalability for real-time traffic analysis in large-scale networks.

6.6. Limitations and Observations

While results are promising, several limitations were observed:

- Encrypted Payloads: The model relies on flow metadata and may not detect advanced botnets using encrypted channels like HTTPS or TOR.
- Adaptation Delay: In hybrid network environments with multiple controllers, policy propagation delay may affect consistency.
- Training Sensitivity: Performance depends on representative training data; zero-day or stealth botnets may evade detection.

Addressing these issues may require combining flow-based detection with deep learning or integrating host-level telemetry.

In sum, the experimental evaluation confirms that the proposed SDN-based botnet detection and mitigation framework is both effective and scalable. It significantly outperforms legacy IDS and firewall systems in accuracy, latency, and system overhead, particularly under large-scale network conditions. While challenges remain in handling encrypted and stealth traffic, the framework lays a robust foundation for next-generation SDN security deployments. Future enhancements should focus on distributed intelligence, encrypted traffic analysis, and adaptive policy control for evolving cyber threats.

7. Conclusion

As botnet attacks continue to evolve in complexity and scale, traditional security architectures rooted in static rule sets and decentralized enforcement are increasingly inadequate for real-time threat mitigation in large-scale networks. This paper presented a comprehensive SDN-based framework designed to detect and mitigate botnet traffic using flow-level analysis and dynamic control policies.

Through extensive simulation using real-world botnet datasets and emulated enterprise-scale topologies, the proposed system demonstrated high detection accuracy (96.3%), low latency response (~41ms), and minimal impact on network performance. Comparative evaluations highlighted its superiority over centralized IDS and traditional firewall solutions, especially under high-flow conditions.

The separation of control and data planes in SDN enabled more adaptive, centralized security logic capable of dynamically responding to threats without requiring changes to physical network infrastructure. The results affirm that SDN not only enhances visibility and responsiveness but also supports seamless integration of machine learning models for real-time threat intelligence.

7.1. Future Work

While the proposed framework establishes a strong foundation, several directions remain open for future enhancement:

- **Encrypted and Obfuscated Traffic Detection**Future work should focus on improving detection of botnets : leveraging encrypted C&C channels or peer-to-peer protocols by integrating metadata fingerprinting and traffic flow behavioral analytics.
- **Integration with Distributed and Multi-Controller SDN Environments:** Large-scale deployment requires resilient, distributed SDN architectures. Extending this framework to multi-controller setups will ensure scalability, fault tolerance, and faster policy propagation.
- **Deep Learning-Based Adaptive Detection:** While the Random Forest model provided reliable performance, future versions can leverage recurrent neural networks (RNNs) or graph neural networks (GNNs) for temporal pattern recognition and better zero-day attack resilience.

- **Real-World Testbed Deployment:** Transitioning from emulated environments to physical testbeds or industry sandbox deployments will validate the system's robustness under live traffic conditions and operational complexity.
- **Security-as-a-Service for SDN:** Exploring the integration of this framework into cloud-native architectures or offering it as a modular Security-as-a-Service (SECaaS) component can enable broader industry adoption.

In conclusion, SDN presents a transformative opportunity to redefine how network security is conceived and implemented. By embedding intelligence into the network fabric, this research contributes a step forward in creating proactive, self-defending infrastructure against increasingly sophisticated botnet threats.

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