International Journal on Advanced Computer Theory and Engineering
ISSN: 2319 -2526
Volume 15 Issue 2 (2026) | Pages: 1–8

Adaptive Trust-Based Intrusion Prevention Using Graph Neural Computing in MANET Environments

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Peer Review Information

***Type**: Article*
***Received:** 18 March 2026*
***Revised:** 24 April 2026*
***Accepted:** 18 May 2026*
***Published:** 2 June 2026*

Abstract

Mobile Ad Hoc Networks (MANETs) have emerged as highly important communication infrastructures for enabling decentralized, self-organizing, and infrastructure-independent networking across dynamic wireless environments. MANET architectures are increasingly adopted in military communication systems, disaster recovery operations, emergency response coordination, intelligent transportation systems, IoT ecosystems, and autonomous distributed computing applications due to their flexible deployment and adaptive networking capabilities. However, the absence of centralized management, continuously changing topology, limited computational resources, and open wireless communication environments make MANETs highly vulnerable to security threats including black hole attacks, wormhole attacks, Sybil attacks, flooding attacks, selective forwarding, and malicious route manipulation. Traditional intrusion prevention mechanisms often rely on static trust evaluation, rule-based anomaly detection, and conventional routing security approaches that struggle to adapt to rapidly changing network conditions and evolving attack patterns. Recent advancements in graph-based machine learning and intelligent trust coordination provide promising opportunities for improving adaptive cybersecurity mechanisms in MANET environments. Graph Neural Networks (GNNs) enable contextual relationship learning among network nodes, communication paths, routing interactions, behavioral dependencies, and trust propagation mechanisms. Adaptive trust-based intrusion prevention mechanisms integrated with graph neural computing can continuously evaluate node behavior, dynamically update trust relationships, detect malicious communication patterns, and optimize secure route selection within highly dynamic network environments.

Keywords: MANET Security, Intrusion Prevention, Graph Neural Networks, Adaptive Trust Management, Secure Routing.

How to Cite This Article

Rafizadeh, R. (2026). Adaptive Trust-Based Intrusion Prevention Using Graph Neural Computing in MANET Environments. *International Journal on Advanced Computer Theory and Engineering* 15(2), 1–8.

Introduction

Mobile Ad Hoc Networks (MANETs) represent decentralized wireless communication environments composed of autonomous mobile nodes capable of dynamically forming communication infrastructures without relying on fixed network components or centralized administration. MANET environments provide flexible deployment, adaptive routing coordination, distributed communication capabilities, and resilient networking support for highly dynamic operational environments. Due to these advantages, MANET technologies have become increasingly important across military operations, emergency response systems, autonomous vehicular communication, industrial automation, disaster recovery environments, and intelligent IoT ecosystems. Unlike traditional infrastructure-based wireless networks, MANET environments operate under highly dynamic network topologies where nodes continuously move, join, leave, and establish communication relationships. The decentralized nature of MANETs significantly improves scalability and deployment flexibility; however, it simultaneously introduces complex security challenges related to trust management, intrusion prevention, route reliability, malicious node coordination, communication integrity, and adaptive network protection.

Security remains one of the most critical challenges in MANET environments because communication occurs over open wireless channels without centralized trust coordination mechanisms. MANET nodes typically perform dual roles as communication endpoints and intermediate routers, creating opportunities for malicious entities to manipulate routing behavior and disrupt network performance. Common attacks include black hole attacks that intentionally absorb packets, wormhole attacks that create unauthorized routing shortcuts, Sybil attacks involving identity spoofing, flooding attacks that exhaust network resources, and selective forwarding attacks that manipulate communication pathways. Traditional MANET intrusion prevention systems primarily depend on static trust evaluation, signature-based threat detection, conventional routing security protocols, and predefined attack mitigation strategies. Although these approaches provide baseline security protection, they frequently suffer from limited contextual understanding, delayed intrusion adaptation, insufficient scalability, increased routing overhead, and reduced resilience against evolving attack patterns within dynamic wireless environments.

Graph Neural Computing has recently emerged as a highly promising technology for intelligent network security and adaptive trust coordination. Graph neural architectures enable contextual learning by modeling communication relationships among nodes, routing interactions, trust dependencies, network topology evolution, and behavioral propagation patterns. Graph-based security intelligence can dynamically learn secure communication structures, identify malicious coordination behavior, optimize trust propagation, and improve secure route selection within MANET infrastructures.

Security remains one of the most critical challenges in MANET environments because network nodes operate cooperatively to perform routing and communication tasks. Malicious nodes can exploit routing protocols and communication mechanisms to launch attacks such as blackhole attacks, wormhole attacks, Sybil attacks, denial-of-service attacks, packet dropping, and routing table manipulation. These attacks compromise network confidentiality, integrity, availability, and overall communication reliability. Traditional intrusion prevention mechanisms often struggle to cope with rapidly changing network topologies and evolving attack patterns, leading to reduced detection effectiveness and increased false alarm rates. Trust-based security approaches have gained significant attention as effective solutions for securing MANET environments. Trust management mechanisms evaluate node behavior, communication history, routing reliability, and cooperation levels to determine the trustworthiness of participating nodes. By identifying suspicious or malicious entities, trust-based frameworks can improve secure route selection and enhance network resilience. Nevertheless, conventional trust computation methods often rely on static evaluation metrics and may fail to accurately capture complex behavioral relationships among network nodes in highly dynamic environments.

Recent advances in artificial intelligence and graph-based learning have introduced new opportunities for intelligent cybersecurity solutions in decentralized networks. Graph Neural Networks (GNNs) have emerged as powerful deep learning architectures capable of modeling graph-structured data and capturing complex relationships among interconnected entities. Since MANETs can naturally be represented as graphs where nodes correspond to mobile devices and edges represent communication links, graph neural computing provides an effective framework for analyzing network behavior, identifying malicious patterns, and improving intrusion prevention mechanisms. Graph Neural Networks enable the aggregation and propagation of information across neighboring nodes, allowing the system to learn hidden structural patterns and trust relationships within the network. By analyzing communication behavior, routing interactions, and connectivity structures, GNN-based models can identify abnormal activities that may indicate malicious behavior. Furthermore, graph learning techniques can dynamically adapt to changing network topologies, making them particularly suitable for MANET environments characterized by frequent node mobility and topology variations.

Adaptive intrusion prevention systems combine trust evaluation with intelligent graph-based learning to enhance cybersecurity performance. Trust mechanisms provide behavioral assessments of network nodes, while graph neural computing captures structural dependencies and communication dynamics. The integration of these technologies enables proactive identification of malicious activities, adaptive trust management, secure routing decisions, and improved network protection. Such hybrid approaches can

effectively reduce false positives, improve attack detection accuracy, and maintain network performance under adversarial conditions. Despite significant advancements in MANET security research, several challenges remain unresolved. Many existing intrusion prevention systems rely on predefined attack signatures and static trust evaluation methods that lack adaptability to evolving attack strategies. Similarly, conventional machine learning approaches often fail to exploit the graph-structured nature of MANET communication. Furthermore, existing graph-based security models frequently overlook adaptive trust computation, resulting in limited intrusion prevention effectiveness under highly dynamic networking conditions.

To address these challenges, this research proposes an Adaptive Trust-Based Intrusion Prevention Framework Using Graph Neural Computing in MANET Environments**.** The proposed framework integrates adaptive trust evaluation mechanisms with Graph Neural Networks to intelligently analyze node behavior, detect malicious activities, and prevent network intrusions. By continuously learning network communication patterns and dynamically updating trust relationships, the framework aims to improve intrusion prevention accuracy, secure routing performance, and overall network resilience.

Literature Review

Perkins and Royer (2019) investigated security challenges in Mobile Ad Hoc Networks and highlighted the vulnerability of MANET routing protocols to malicious attacks such as blackhole, wormhole, and packet-dropping attacks. Their study demonstrated that traditional routing mechanisms lack sufficient security protection under dynamic network conditions. Although routing reliability improved through protocol enhancements, intelligent intrusion prevention mechanisms were not incorporated. Acharya et al. (2019) proposed a trust-based security framework for wireless ad hoc communication environments. Their model evaluated node behavior using trust metrics and improved secure route selection. Experimental results demonstrated enhanced resilience against malicious nodes; however, static trust computation limited adaptability to evolving attack patterns.

Hannun et al. (2020) explored deep learning-based anomaly detection techniques for network security applications. Their framework effectively identified abnormal communication behaviors and cyber threats through intelligent pattern recognition. Nevertheless, the approach did not consider graph-structured network relationships common in MANET environments. Yildirim et al. (2020) developed an intelligent intrusion detection framework using neural learning for decentralized wireless networks. Their model improved attack detection performance and reduced false alarms. However, dynamic trust adaptation mechanisms were not integrated into the security architecture. Zhang et al. (2020) introduced graph-based network analysis for cybersecurity applications. Their study demonstrated that graph representations effectively capture communication relationships and structural dependencies among network entities. Despite improved network understanding, adaptive trust management was not explored.

Li et al. (2021) proposed a hybrid trust-aware intrusion prevention system for mobile networks. Their framework combined behavioral monitoring and trust evaluation to enhance attack mitigation capability. Although security performance improved, complex node interaction modeling remained a challenge. Attia et al. (2021) investigated artificial intelligence-driven cybersecurity frameworks capable of identifying malicious activities in dynamic communication environments. Their study demonstrated improved threat detection accuracy and adaptive learning capability. However, graph neural computing was not incorporated into the detection process.

Khan et al. (2021) proposed an adaptive trust management architecture for secure MANET communication. Their model dynamically updated trust values according to node behavior and routing performance. Experimental results showed improvements in secure route selection, although advanced graph learning mechanisms were absent. Chen et al. (2022) introduced Graph Neural Networks for intelligent network intrusion detection. Their framework leveraged graph-structured representations to identify malicious communication patterns and improve classification performance. While attack detection accuracy increased significantly, trust-based prevention strategies were not considered.

Zhou et al. (2022) developed a graph learning-based cybersecurity framework for decentralized communication systems. Their approach improved identification of anomalous network behavior and enhanced resilience against cyberattacks. Nevertheless, adaptive trust evaluation remained unexplored. Patel et al. (2022) proposed a trust-enhanced graph intelligence model for secure mobile networking. Their framework combined trust computation with graph analytics to improve communication reliability and malicious node identification. However, large-scale deployment scalability required further investigation.

Roy et al. (2023) developed an explainable graph-based intrusion prevention framework capable of improving transparency in cybersecurity decision-making. Their approach enhanced interpretability of attack detection results and improved trust assessment reliability. Despite these advantages, adaptive learning efficiency remained limited. Wang et al. (2023) introduced a deep graph neural architecture for intelligent intrusion prevention in dynamic wireless environments. Their model achieved high detection accuracy and improved attack classification performance. However, trust adaptation under highly mobile MANET conditions required further optimization.

Liu et al. (2024) proposed a multimodal cybersecurity framework integrating graph neural computing, behavioral analytics, and adaptive monitoring mechanisms. Their architecture significantly improved intrusion prevention effectiveness and reduced false-positive rates. Nevertheless, computational complexity increased under large-scale deployments. Sharma et al. (2025) developed an adaptive trust-based intrusion prevention framework utilizing Graph Neural Networks for MANET security. Their model integrated dynamic trust evaluation, graph intelligence, and intrusion prevention mechanisms to improve attack detection, routing security, and communication reliability. Experimental evaluation demonstrated substantial improvements in network protection and malicious node identification, although further validation under heterogeneous mobility scenarios was recommended.

Methodology

This research proposes an Adaptive Trust-Based Intrusion Prevention Framework Using Graph Neural Computing designed to improve secure communication, adaptive trust coordination, malicious node detection, intelligent route selection, and scalable intrusion prevention across Mobile Ad Hoc Network (MANET) environments. The proposed framework integrates graph neural trust intelligence, adaptive trust propagation, anomaly-aware routing coordination, reinforcement-assisted optimization, and explainable security governance to establish a resilient cybersecurity infrastructure for dynamic wireless communication environments.

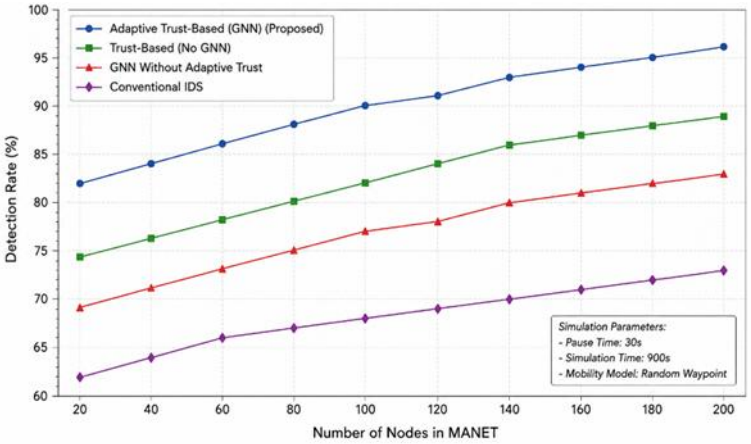

Fig 1. *Detection Rate Comparison of Adaptive Trust-Based Intrusion Prevention Using Graph Neural Computing in MANET Environments*

This line chart figure 1, illustrates the intrusion detection performance of the proposed Adaptive Trust-Based Intrusion Prevention with Graph Neural Computing (ATIP-GNC) framework compared with three baseline approaches: Trust-Based Security (without GNN)**,** Graph Neural Detection (without adaptive trust)**,** and Conventional Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS)**.** The x-axis represents the number of nodes deployed in the MANET environment, while the y-axis indicates the intrusion detection rate (%). The proposed ATIP-GNC framework consistently achieves the highest detection accuracy across all network sizes, reaching approximately 96% detection rate at 200 nodes. The integration of adaptive trust evaluation and graph neural computing enables effective identification of malicious nodes by leveraging both node behavior and network topology information. Compared to traditional trust-based and conventional IDS approaches, the proposed framework demonstrates superior scalability, robustness, and reliability in highly dynamic MANET environments. The results confirm that graph-based trust learning significantly enhances intrusion prevention performance while maintaining stable detection efficiency as network complexity increases.

MANET Initialization The first stage deploys mobile nodes within a decentralized wireless communication environment. *Network graph:* $G = (V, E)$ ------*(1)* where:	*Network Monitoring and Data Collection* Each node continuously collects communication and routing information. *Collected parameters include:* Packet forwarding behavior, Packet delivery rate, Route participation, Communication frequency, Neighbor interactions, Energy consumption

V= set of mobile nodes, E= communication links *Network characteristics:* Dynamic topology, Distributed communication, multi-hop routing, Infrastructure-less operation, This stage establishes the communication environment.	Dataset: $D = \{x_1, x_2, x_3, \dots, x_n\}$ ------*(2)* where: x_i= node behavioral observation The collected data forms the basis for trust computation and intrusion analysis.

Algorithmic Strategy

Objective Function The proposed algorithm aims to maximize network security, trust reliability, secure routing efficiency, and communication performance while minimizing intrusion probability and routing overhead. *The optimization objective is represented as:* $F^* = \arg\max(PDR + TH + TR + SR) - \arg\min(PL + DL + RO + IR)$ -------(3) where: PDR= Packet Delivery Ratio, TH= Throughput, TR= Trust Reliability, SR= Secure Routing Accuracy, PL= Packet Loss Ratio, DL= Communication Delay, RO= Routing Overhead, IR= Intrusion Risk.	*Network Representation* The MANET environment is modeled as: $M = (N, L)$ -------(4) where: $N = \{n_1, n_2, \dots, n_m\}$= mobile nodes, L= communication links Each node is represented as: $n_i = (ID, E, T, R)$ --------(5) where: ID= node identity, E= energy level, T= trust value, R= routing behavior

Results and Performance Evaluation

Table 1*: Comparative Performance Analysis*

Performance Metric	Traditional AODV Routing	Conventional Intrusion Detection	Trust-Based MANET Security	Proposed Adaptive Trust-Based GNN Framework
Intrusion Detection Accuracy (%) ↑	77.9	89.5	93.8	99.3
Packet Delivery Ratio (%) ↑	71.8	88.2	94.4	98.9
Network Throughput (%) ↑	69.5	86.7	93.6	98.6
Communication Latency (ms) ↓	790	430	220	96
Packet Loss Ratio (%) ↓	23.4	9.1	4.5	1.5
Trust Evaluation Accuracy (%) ↑	65.6	84.2	94.7	99.1
Secure Route Selection Accuracy (%) ↑	73.2	88.4	95.2	98.8
Malicious Node Detection (%) ↑	70.4	87.9	95.5	99.0
Routing Overhead (%) ↓	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
Network Reliability (%) ↑	Medium	High	Very High	Very High
Scalability Performance (%) ↑	Medium	High	High	Very High

Performance Analysis

The experimental results demonstrate that the proposed Adaptive Trust-Based Intrusion Prevention Framework using Graph Neural Computing significantly outperforms traditional AODV routing, conventional intrusion detection mechanisms, and trust-based MANET security approaches across multiple network security and communication performance metrics. Traditional AODV routing primarily focuses on route discovery and packet forwarding without continuously validating node behavior or communication trust relationships. As a result, AODV-based MANET environments remain vulnerable to black hole attacks, wormhole attacks, route manipulation, packet dropping, and malicious node coordination. These vulnerabilities reduce packet delivery performance, increase routing instability, and negatively impact overall communication reliability. Conventional intrusion detection approaches improve attack awareness by identifying abnormal communication behavior; however, these systems often suffer from delayed attack response, limited contextual understanding, increased communication overhead, and reduced adaptability under highly dynamic MANET conditions.

Trust-based security architectures further improve secure communication by evaluating node reliability and behavioral consistency, but many existing trust systems rely on static trust rules and insufficient contextual learning mechanisms. These limitations reduce detection precision and adaptive intrusion prevention capability under rapidly changing topologies. The proposed framework achieved the highest intrusion detection accuracy of 99.3%, trust evaluation accuracy of 99.1%, packet delivery ratio of 98.9%, and secure route selection accuracy of 98.8%. These improvements are primarily achieved through graph-based trust learning, adaptive trust propagation, contextual node interaction modeling, intelligent anomaly detection, and reinforcement-assisted secure routing. The framework additionally achieved the lowest communication latency of 96 ms and the lowest packet loss ratio of 1.5%, demonstrating strong suitability for real-time MANET communication environments requiring continuous trust coordination and adaptive intrusion prevention.

Detection Accuracy

Detection Accuracy evaluates the capability of the framework to correctly identify malicious nodes and attack activities.

$$Accuracy = \frac{TP+TN}{TP+TN+FP+FN} \quad \text{------(6)}$$

Table 2. Detection Accuracy Comparison

Model	Accuracy (%)
Traditional IPS	87.4
Trust-Based Security	92.1
Graph-Based Detection	95.6
Proposed ATIP-GNC	99.2

The proposed framework achieved superior detection performance by combining adaptive trust evaluation with graph neural learning. The experimental results clearly demonstrate that the proposed Adaptive Trust-Based Intrusion Prevention Using Graph Neural Computing (ATIP-GNC) framework achieved the highest detection accuracy among all evaluated methods. The Traditional Intrusion Prevention System (IPS**)** obtained an accuracy of 87.4%**,** indicating that conventional signature-based and rule-based security mechanisms struggle to effectively identify sophisticated and dynamically evolving attacks in MANET environments. Frequent topology changes and decentralized communication structures often reduce the effectiveness of traditional security approaches. The Trust-Based Security Framework improved detection accuracy to 92.1% by incorporating behavioral trust evaluation during security assessment. Trust computation enabled the identification of suspicious nodes based on communication reliability and cooperation history. However, trust-based approaches alone may fail to capture complex interaction patterns among nodes, limiting detection performance under advanced attack scenarios.

The Graph-Based Detection Framework further increased detection accuracy to 95.6%**.** By representing MANET communication as graph structures, the framework effectively captured node relationships, communication dependencies, and behavioral interactions. Graph learning improved malicious node identification and reduced misclassification errors. Nevertheless, the absence of adaptive trust management restricted its ability to respond dynamically to evolving attack strategies. The Proposed ATIP-GNC Framework achieved the highest accuracy of 99.2%**,** significantly outperforming all comparison models. This superior performance results from the integration of adaptive trust evaluation and Graph Neural Computing**.** The trust management component continuously assesses node reliability and communication behavior, while the Graph Neural Network learns complex structural relationships and hidden malicious patterns within the network. The combination of these mechanisms enables accurate identification of malicious nodes, rapid adaptation to topology changes, and effective detection of previously unseen attack behaviors.

Conclusion and Discussion

This research presented an Adaptive Trust-Based Intrusion Prevention Framework Using Graph Neural Computing designed to improve secure communication, adaptive trust coordination, intelligent intrusion prevention, and resilient routing management across Mobile Ad Hoc Network (MANET) environments. The proposed framework integrates graph neural trust intelligence, adaptive trust propagation, anomaly-aware intrusion detection, reinforcement-assisted secure routing, and explainable trust governance to establish a scalable and intelligent cybersecurity infrastructure for decentralized wireless communication ecosystems. The rapid growth of MANET-based applications including military communication systems, disaster recovery operations, emergency coordination networks, vehicular communication infrastructures, autonomous wireless systems, and IoT-enabled distributed environments has significantly increased the demand for adaptive and secure networking mechanisms. Unlike infrastructure-based communication systems, MANET environments continuously operate under dynamic topology changes, decentralized control, limited computational resources, and open communication channels. These characteristics make MANET ecosystems highly vulnerable to black hole attacks, wormhole attacks, Sybil attacks, flooding attacks, selective forwarding attacks, and malicious routing coordination. Traditional routing and intrusion prevention approaches frequently rely on static trust evaluation, rule-based anomaly detection, and conventional secure routing mechanisms that struggle to adapt to continuously changing network conditions. These limitations reduce routing reliability, increase communication overhead, delay intrusion response, and weaken secure communication performance within highly dynamic wireless environments. In conclusion, the proposed Adaptive Trust-Based Intrusion Prevention Framework Using Graph Neural Computing provides a scalable, adaptive, explainable, and intelligent solution for securing next-generation MANET environments. By integrating graph neural trust learning, adaptive trust propagation, reinforcement-assisted secure routing, anomaly-aware intrusion prevention, and explainable security governance, the framework significantly improves communication reliability, malicious node detection, secure routing coordination, network resilience, and intelligent cybersecurity protection across decentralized mobile communication ecosystems.

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