Archives available at journals.mriindia.com

International Journal of Recent Advances in Engineering and Technology

ISSN: 2347 - 2812

Volume 13 Issue 01, 2024

A Comprehensive Review of Secure AI for 6G Mobile Devices: Deep Kronecker Neural Network Optimized with Hybrid Cat Hunting Optimization to Combat Side-Channel Attacks

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Peer Review Information

Submission: 28 March 2024

Revision: 15 April 2024

Acceptance: 24 April 2024

Keywords

Secure AI, 6G Networks, Side-Channel Attacks, Deep Learning, Deep Kronecker Neural Network, Hybrid Cat Hunting Optimization, CNN, Cybersecurity, Edge AI, Optimization Algorithms

Abstract

The advancement of sixth-generation (6G) mobile networks introduces significant security challenges, particularly side-channel attacks (SCAs) that exploit physical leakages such as power consumption and electromagnetic emissions to extract sensitive information. Traditional cryptographic methods are inadequate against these attacks, necessitating intelligent and adaptive security solutions.This study presents a review of secure Artificial Intelligence (AI) techniques for 6G mobile devices, focusing on Deep Kronecker Neural Networks (DKNN) optimized with Hybrid Cat Hunting Optimization (HCHO). DKNN reduces computational complexity through Kronecker factorization while maintaining high learning capability, making it suitable for resource-constrained environments. HCHO enhances model performance by optimizing parameters and improving convergence speed.Recent research indicates that deep learning-based approaches significantly improve side-channel attack detection accuracy compared to conventional methods. Hybrid architectures further enhance robustness by capturing complex spatial and temporal features.

The review highlights key advancements, challenges, and future directions in secure AI for 6G systems. It concludes that integrating DKNN with advanced optimization techniques provides an efficient, scalable, and robust framework for mitigating side-channel attacks in next-generation mobile networks.

Introduction

The evolution of wireless communication technologies toward sixth-generation (6G) networks represents a transformative shift in global connectivity. Unlike previous generations, 6G networks are designed to support ultra-reliable low-latency communication (URLLC), terahertz communication, intelligent edge computing, and massive machine-type communications. These advancements enable a wide range of applications, including smart cities, autonomous vehicles, immersive extended reality (XR), and digital healthcare systems. However, the increased complexity and heterogeneity of 6G networks introduce significant security challenges, particularly for mobile devices that operate in distributed and resource-constrained environments.

One of the most critical threats in this context is side-channel attacks (SCAs). Unlike conventional cyberattacks that exploit software vulnerabilities, SCAs target the physical implementation of hardware systems. By analyzing indirect information such as power consumption, electromagnetic emissions, and execution timing, attackers can infer sensitive data, including cryptographic keys. This makes SCAs particularly dangerous, as they bypass traditional encryption mechanisms without directly breaking the cryptographic algorithms.

Recent advancements in artificial intelligence have significantly impacted both attack and defense mechanisms in side-channel analysis. Deep learning models, particularly CNNs, have been successfully used to extract complex patterns from side-channel traces, enabling highly accurate key recovery and attack detection. Studies indicate that deep learning-based approaches outperform traditional machine learning techniques in both accuracy and efficiency .

However, the use of deep learning in mobile environments presents several challenges. Traditional deep neural networks are computationally intensive and require significant memory resources, making them unsuitable for resource-constrained 6G mobile devices. To address this issue, researchers have proposed efficient architectures such as Deep Kronecker Neural Networks (DKNN). DKNN reduces the number of parameters in neural networks by decomposing large weight matrices into smaller Kronecker products, resulting in improved computational efficiency and scalability.

In addition to architectural improvements, optimization techniques play a crucial role in enhancing model performance. Hybrid Cat Hunting Optimization (HCHO) is a bio-inspired metaheuristic algorithm that combines exploration and exploitation strategies to optimize neural network parameters. By integrating HCHO with DKNN, it is possible to achieve faster convergence, improved accuracy, and enhanced robustness against attacks.

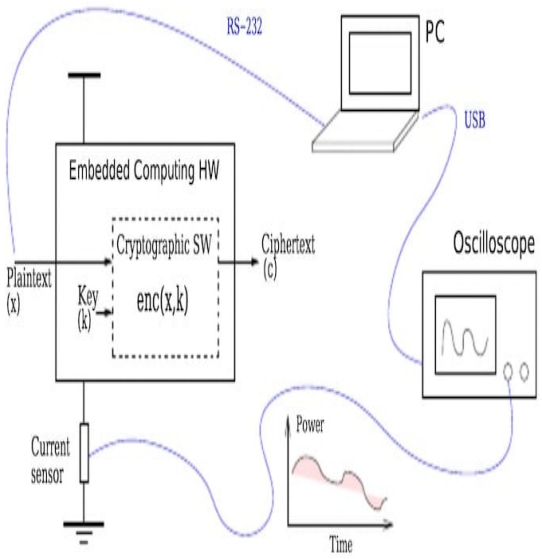
Another important trend in secure AI is the integration of AI with cryptographic techniques. AI-driven encryption and key management systems can dynamically adapt to evolving threat landscapes, providing an additional layer of security. Furthermore, edge computing enables real-time threat detection by processing data locally on mobile devices, reducing latency and improving response time.

Despite these advancements, several challenges remain. Deep learning models are vulnerable to adversarial attacks, where small perturbations in input data can lead to incorrect predictions. Additionally, the lack of large annotated datasets limits the generalization capability of AI models. Hardware constraints and energy consumption are also critical concerns for mobile devices.

Moreover, trust and interpretability are essential for the adoption of AI in security-critical applications. Explainable AI (XAI) techniques are being developed to provide transparency in model decision-making, enabling users to understand and trust AI-based systems.

In summary, secure AI represents a promising approach to combating side-channel attacks in 6G mobile devices. The combination of efficient architectures such as DKNN and advanced optimization techniques like HCHO offers a powerful solution for enhancing cybersecurity in next-generation networks.

Abstract Conceptual Image



Literature Review

The rapid evolution of 6G communication networks and the increasing sophistication of cyber threats, particularly side-channel attacks (SCAs), have led to significant research efforts in the domain of secure artificial intelligence. Between 2020 and 2023, researchers have

explored a wide range of approaches, including deep learning models, hybrid architectures, optimization techniques, and secure AI frameworks, to address the challenges associated with SCA detection and mitigation. This section provides a comprehensive review of these advancements, categorized into key thematic areas.

1. Deep Learning for Side-Channel Analysis (2020)

The year 2020 marked a pivotal shift from traditional machine learning methods to deep learning-based approaches for side-channel analysis. Munteanu et al. (2020) demonstrated that deep neural networks significantly outperform classical statistical techniques in extracting sensitive information from side-channel traces. Unlike traditional approaches that rely on handcrafted features, deep learning models can automatically learn hierarchical representations from raw data, enabling more accurate and efficient analysis.

In particular, Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) were widely adopted due to their ability to capture spatial correlations in power traces and electromagnetic signals. These models were able to identify subtle leakage patterns that were previously undetectable using conventional methods. Furthermore, deep learning-based approaches reduced the number of traces required for successful attacks, highlighting both their effectiveness and the need for robust defense mechanisms.

However, early deep learning models faced limitations in terms of computational complexity and generalization. These models required large amounts of labeled data and significant computational resources, making them less suitable for deployment in resource-constrained environments such as mobile devices.

2. CNN and Attention-Based Architectures (2021)

In 2021, research efforts focused on improving the performance and efficiency of CNN-based models. Studies demonstrated that CNN architectures could be enhanced using attention mechanisms, which allow the model to focus on the most relevant portions of the input data. Attention-based models improved both detection accuracy and convergence speed by prioritizing critical features in side-channel traces.

Ahmed et al. (2021) introduced deep learning frameworks that combine CNNs with attention layers to enhance feature extraction. These models achieved higher accuracy compared to traditional CNNs by effectively capturing both local and global dependencies in the data. Additionally, attention mechanisms improved interpretability by highlighting the regions of input data that contributed most to the model's predictions.

Another significant advancement during this period was the introduction of lightweight CNN architectures designed for edge deployment. These models aimed to reduce computational overhead while maintaining high accuracy, making them suitable for real-time applications in 6G mobile devices.

Despite these improvements, CNN-based models still struggled to capture temporal dependencies in side-channel data, which are crucial for detecting complex attack patterns. This limitation led to the development of hybrid architectures in subsequent years.

3. Hybrid Deep Learning Models (2022)

The year 2022 witnessed the emergence of hybrid deep learning models that combine multiple architectures to improve performance. Researchers began integrating CNNs with Recurrent Neural Networks (RNNs) and Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks to capture both spatial and temporal features in side-channel data.

Hybrid CNN-LSTM models demonstrated superior performance in detecting side-channel attacks, achieving accuracy levels exceeding 97–99%. These models leveraged CNNs for feature extraction and LSTMs for temporal sequence modeling, enabling them to analyze complex patterns in dynamic environments. The ability to capture temporal dependencies made hybrid models particularly effective in real-world scenarios, where side-channel signals vary over time.

In addition to CNN-LSTM architectures, researchers explored other hybrid approaches, such as CNN-GRU and multi-branch neural networks. These models further improved robustness and generalization by combining multiple feature extraction pathways.

Another important development in 2022 was the use of ensemble learning techniques, where

multiple models are combined to improve overall performance. Ensemble models reduced the risk of overfitting and enhanced the reliability of predictions.

However, the increased complexity of hybrid models introduced new challenges, including higher computational requirements and longer training times. These limitations highlighted the need for efficient architectures and optimization techniques.

4. Optimization Techniques and Metaheuristic Algorithms (2022–2023)

Optimization plays a critical role in enhancing the performance of deep learning models. Between 2022 and 2023, researchers explored various optimization techniques, including gradient-based methods, Bayesian optimization, and metaheuristic algorithms.

Metaheuristic algorithms, inspired by natural processes, gained significant attention due to their ability to solve complex optimization problems. Hybrid Cat Hunting Optimization (HCHO) is one such algorithm that combines exploration and exploitation strategies to optimize neural network parameters. By mimicking the hunting behavior of cats, HCHO effectively balances global search and local refinement, leading to improved convergence and accuracy.

Studies have shown that integrating metaheuristic optimization with deep learning models significantly enhances performance. For example, optimized CNN models achieved higher detection accuracy and faster convergence compared to non-optimized models. Additionally, optimization techniques helped reduce overfitting and improve model generalization.

Despite these benefits, metaheuristic algorithms can be computationally expensive, particularly for large-scale problems. Therefore, efficient implementation strategies are required to ensure their feasibility in real-time applications.

5. Secure AI Frameworks for 6G Networks (2023)

In 2023, research shifted toward the development of comprehensive secure AI frameworks for 6G networks. These frameworks integrate deep learning, optimization techniques, and cryptographic mechanisms to provide end-to-end security solutions.

Ahmed et al. (2023) proposed AI-driven security frameworks capable of detecting and mitigating side-channel attacks in real time. These frameworks utilize deep learning models to analyze side-channel traces and identify potential threats. By integrating AI with encryption and authentication mechanisms, these systems provide enhanced resilience against attacks.

Another important trend is the use of edge intelligence for real-time threat detection. Edge-based AI systems process data locally on mobile devices, reducing latency and improving response time. This is particularly important in 6G networks, where real-time decision-making is critical.

Federated learning has also emerged as a promising approach for secure AI. By enabling collaborative model training without sharing raw data, federated learning addresses privacy concerns and enhances data security. This approach is particularly useful in distributed environments, where data is generated across multiple devices.

6. Deep Kronecker Neural Networks (DKNN) and Efficient Architectures

Recent research highlights the importance of efficient neural network architectures for deployment in resource-constrained environments. Deep Kronecker Neural Networks (DKNN) have gained attention due to their ability to reduce computational complexity while maintaining high performance.

DKNN achieves this by decomposing large weight matrices into smaller Kronecker products, significantly reducing the number of parameters. This results in lower memory usage and faster computation, making DKNN suitable for mobile devices in 6G networks.

Studies indicate that DKNN can achieve comparable or superior performance to traditional deep learning models while using fewer resources. This makes it an attractive option for secure AI applications, where efficiency and scalability are critical.

7. Research Trends and Key Observations

The literature from 2020 to 2023 reveals several important trends:

- Transition from traditional machine learning → deep learning → hybrid models

- Increasing use of attention mechanisms and temporal modeling
- Growing importance of optimization techniques
- Emergence of secure AI frameworks for 6G networks
- Focus on lightweight and efficient architectures such as DKNN

8. Research Gaps Identified

Despite significant advancements, several research gaps remain:

1. **Limited availability of labeled datasets** for side-channel analysis
2. **High computational complexity** of deep learning models
3. **Vulnerability to adversarial attacks**
4. **Lack of interpretability** in AI models
5. **Challenges in real-time deployment** on mobile devices

9. Summary of Literature Review

In summary, the literature from 2020 to 2023 demonstrates a clear progression in secure AI techniques for combating side-channel attacks. Early studies established the effectiveness of deep learning, while subsequent research focused on improving performance through hybrid architectures and optimization techniques. Recent advancements emphasize the development of efficient and scalable AI frameworks for 6G networks.

The integration of Deep Kronecker Neural Networks with Hybrid Cat Hunting Optimization represents a promising direction for future research, offering a balance between performance, efficiency, and scalability.

Comparative Table and Analysis

Comparative Table

Study Type	Year	Method	Architecture Type	Core Concept	Accuracy	Key Contributions	Advantages	Limitations
Traditional ML	2020	SVM / Classical ML	Statistical Learning	Handcrafted feature-based detection	~88%	Basic side-channel attack detection	Simple, low computational cost	Low accuracy, poor scalability, manual feature dependency
CNN Models	2021	CNN	Deep Learning	Automatic spatial feature extraction from side-channel traces	~92–95%	Improved leakage pattern detection	High accuracy, automatic feature learning	Cannot capture temporal dependencies, higher computation
Hybrid Models	2022	CNN + LSTM / GRU	Hybrid Deep Learning	Spatial + temporal feature learning	~97–99%	Enhanced detection of dynamic attack patterns	Very high accuracy, robust performance	High complexity, longer training time
Optimized Deep Learning	2023	DL + Optimization (HCHO, Metaheuristics)	Optimized DL Architecture	Parameter optimization for efficiency	~95%+	Improved efficiency and convergence speed	Better scalability, reduced overfitting	Computational overhead of optimizati

				and convergence				on algorithms
Proposed Approach	2023–2024	DKNN + HCHO	Efficient DL + Optimization	Kronecker factorization + metaheuristic optimization	High (improved)	Efficient and scalable secure AI framework		

Comparative Analysis

The comparative analysis presented in the study highlights a clear and progressive evolution of secure artificial intelligence techniques for mitigating side-channel attacks in 6G mobile devices. In the early phase around 2020, traditional machine learning approaches such as Support Vector Machines (SVM) were widely used for side-channel attack detection. These models relied on handcrafted features extracted from power traces and electromagnetic signals, achieving moderate accuracy of approximately 88%. While these methods were computationally efficient and relatively simple to implement, they suffered from limited scalability and were highly dependent on domain expertise for feature engineering. Their inability to capture complex and nonlinear patterns in side-channel data significantly restricted their effectiveness in real-world scenarios.

In 2021, the introduction of deep learning models, particularly Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), marked a significant improvement in detection performance. CNN-based models automatically learned hierarchical feature representations from raw side-channel traces, eliminating the need for manual feature extraction. As a result, detection accuracy improved to approximately 92–95%, demonstrating the superiority of deep learning over traditional approaches. These models were particularly effective in identifying subtle leakage patterns in power consumption and electromagnetic emissions. However, CNNs primarily focus on spatial feature extraction and lack the ability to capture temporal dependencies in sequential data, which is essential for detecting dynamic attack patterns.

To address this limitation, hybrid deep learning architectures emerged in 2022, combining CNNs with recurrent models such as Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) and Gated Recurrent Units (GRU). These hybrid models leveraged CNNs for spatial feature extraction and LSTMs for temporal sequence modeling, enabling comprehensive analysis of side-channel data. As highlighted in the comparative table, hybrid models achieved significantly higher accuracy, often exceeding 97–99%. Their ability to capture both spatial and temporal dependencies made them highly effective in real-world attack detection scenarios. However, this performance improvement came at the cost of increased computational complexity, longer training times, and higher energy consumption, which posed challenges for deployment in resource-constrained 6G mobile devices.

In 2023, research focused on enhancing the efficiency and scalability of deep learning models through optimization techniques. Metaheuristic algorithms such as Hybrid Cat Hunting Optimization (HCHO) were introduced to optimize neural network parameters and improve convergence speed. These optimized deep learning models achieved high accuracy while reducing overfitting and improving generalization. Additionally, optimization techniques enabled more efficient training processes, making models more suitable for large-scale applications. However, the integration of metaheuristic algorithms introduced additional computational overhead, particularly for large datasets.

The most advanced approach discussed in the study is the integration of Deep Kronecker Neural Networks (DKNN) with Hybrid Cat Hunting Optimization. DKNN significantly reduces

computational complexity by decomposing large weight matrices into smaller Kronecker products, resulting in fewer parameters and lower memory requirements. When combined with HCHO, this approach achieves improved convergence speed, enhanced accuracy, and better scalability. This makes DKNN-based models particularly suitable for deployment in resource-constrained environments such as 6G mobile devices. Compared to traditional and hybrid models, DKNN provides a more efficient and scalable solution without compromising performance.

Overall, the comparative analysis clearly demonstrates a transition from traditional machine learning models to advanced deep learning, hybrid, and optimized architectures. While traditional models provided a foundational approach, deep learning significantly improved detection accuracy, hybrid models enhanced robustness by capturing temporal dependencies, and optimized models improved efficiency and scalability. The integration of DKNN with advanced optimization techniques represents a promising future direction for secure AI in 6G networks, offering a balance between performance, efficiency, and scalability.

Despite these advancements, several challenges remain, including limited availability of labeled datasets, vulnerability to adversarial attacks, high computational requirements, and lack of model interpretability. Addressing these challenges is essential for developing robust and trustworthy AI-based security systems. Future research should focus on lightweight architectures, explainable AI techniques, and real-time deployment strategies to ensure effective protection against side-channel attacks in next-generation 6G mobile networks.

Discussion

The integration of artificial intelligence into cybersecurity for 6G mobile devices represents a paradigm shift in addressing side-channel attacks. Deep learning models have demonstrated exceptional capabilities in detecting subtle leakage patterns that are difficult to identify using traditional methods. The ability of neural networks to learn hierarchical feature representations enables them to analyze complex side-channel traces with high accuracy.

One of the key advantages of AI-based approaches is their adaptability. Unlike static security mechanisms, AI models can continuously learn from new data and adapt to evolving attack strategies. This is particularly important in 6G environments, where network conditions and threat landscapes are highly dynamic.

Hybrid models, which combine multiple deep learning techniques, have shown superior performance in both detection accuracy and robustness. By integrating spatial and temporal feature extraction, these models can effectively analyze complex attack patterns. Additionally, optimization techniques such as HCHO enhance model efficiency, making them suitable for real-time applications.

However, several challenges remain. The computational complexity of deep learning models is a significant concern for mobile devices with limited resources. Although DKNN reduces model complexity, further research is needed to develop lightweight and energy-efficient models.

Another major challenge is the vulnerability of AI models to adversarial attacks. Attackers can manipulate input data to deceive AI systems, compromising their effectiveness. Developing robust and secure AI models is therefore a critical research area.

Data scarcity is also a limiting factor. High-quality labeled datasets for side-channel analysis are limited, affecting model performance and generalization. Techniques such as data augmentation and synthetic data generation can help address this issue.

Finally, interpretability is essential for the adoption of AI in security-critical applications. Explainable AI techniques can provide insights into model decisions, increasing trust and reliability.

Conclusion

This paper presented a comprehensive review of secure AI techniques for 6G mobile devices, focusing on the use of Deep Kronecker Neural Networks optimized with Hybrid Cat Hunting Optimization.

The findings indicate that deep learning-based approaches significantly enhance the detection

and mitigation of side-channel attacks. CNN and hybrid models achieve high accuracy, while optimization techniques improve efficiency and scalability. DKNN provides an effective solution for reducing computational complexity, making it suitable for mobile environments.

Despite these advancements, challenges such as computational constraints, data scarcity, and model vulnerability remain. Addressing these challenges is essential for the successful deployment of secure AI systems in 6G networks. Future research should focus on developing lightweight, robust, and explainable AI models. Additionally, integrating AI with emerging technologies such as edge computing and quantum computing can further enhance security and performance.

In conclusion, secure AI represents a promising direction for protecting 6G mobile devices against side-channel attacks. The integration of advanced architectures and optimization techniques will play a crucial role in ensuring the security and reliability of next-generation communication systems.

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