Autoencoder Optimization for Anomaly Detection: A Comparative Study with Shallow Algorithms

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***Abstract*—This paper presents an innovative guide for optimizing autoencoder performance, specifically targeting anomaly detection tasks. In addressing prevalent issues in deep learning algorithms, our primary focus lies in effectively selecting and controlling the latent space in autoencoders. We comprehensively explore methodologies for determining the optimal latent size, a critical and often overlooked aspect in autoencoder architectures. This endeavor forms part of a broader initiative to enhance autoencoder efficacy, ensuring their performance is on par with or superior to many shallow learning algorithms, a challenge highlighted in studies like *ADBENCH*. Our approach encompasses a detailed examination and experimentation with various parameters, architectures, and loss functions, all aimed at refining the efficiency and accuracy of autoencoders in anomaly detection for image and tabular data.**

This research stands out for its dual focus on image and tabular datasets. We thoroughly examine the performance of autoencoders in detecting anomalies, utilizing a variety of autoencoder architectures and diverse hyperparameters.

***Index Terms*—Autoencoder, Anomaly Detection, Hyperparameter**

I. Introduction

Anomaly detection is crucial in extracting insights and identifying irregularities across various domains. This is particularly relevant in image and tabular data, where anomalies can reveal critical insights into environmental monitoring, machinery fault detection, fraud detection, and network security. In image data, anomalies can manifest as irregular patterns or unexpected features, while in tabular data, they often appear as statistical outliers or uncommon data points. Identifying and analyzing these anomalies is essential for effective decision-making and problem-solving in these areas [1], [2]. However, this field faces several challenges in image and tabular data contexts. The need for labeled data in image datasets is a major hurdle, as it is crucial for training robust models but often requires more effort to acquire. This issue extends to tabular data, where the quality and representation of data significantly impact model performance [40]. Moreover, defining an anomaly is inherently ambiguous and varies widely across applications and data types [39]. The presence of noise in datasets, common to both image and tabular data, heightens the risk of false positives or missed detections [8]. Additionally, the challenge of obtaining clean, representative samples to model normal behavior further complicates effective anomaly detection in both domains.

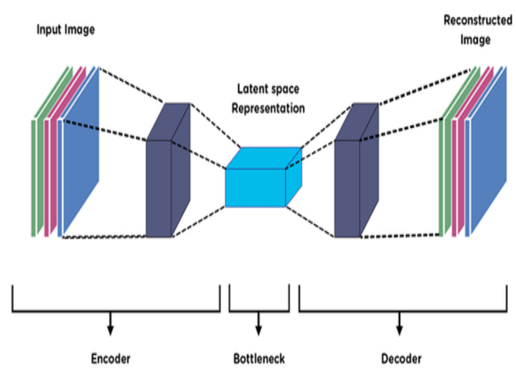

Fig. 1. Autoencoder Neural Network. This schematic illustrates the three main components: the Encoder compresses the input image into a latent space representation, the Bottleneck captures the core features, and the Decoder reconstructs the image from these features, demonstrating the autoencoder's capability for dimensionality reduction and feature extraction [7].

Figure 1 illustrates the architecture of an autoencoder, a key tool in anomaly detection of both image and tabular data [7]. An autoencoder typically consists of three core components: the Encoder, Bottleneck, and Decoder. While the encoder compresses the input data into a compact representation, the decoder reconstructs the data from this condensed form, enabling the autoencoder to learn efficient data representations. This ability is particularly beneficial for identifying deviations in complex and high-dimensional datasets, a task where traditional methods often fall short due to their inability to handle interdependent and heterogeneous data effectively [1], [8].

Deep autoencoders, which feature multiple layers in the encoder and decoder, enhance this capability. They offer advantages like reduced computational demands, lesser requirements for extensive training data, and an improved capacity to capture intricate, non-linear patterns. This makes them highly suitable for complex anomaly detection tasks, especially in recognizing and differentiating anomalies within the image and tabular datasets [2], [3].

Despite their advantages, deep learning algorithms, including autoencoders, face challenges. Recent benchmarks like *ADBENCH* have shown that these algorithms can sometimes underperform compared to traditional methods, primarily due to their complex training needs [1]. This study aims to refine the training techniques of autoencoders to enhance their effectiveness in anomaly detection within the image and tabular data. This research challenges the notion that deeper models are inherently less efficient in anomaly detection by optimizing the autoencoder architecture and adjusting parameters for optimal latent space representation. The goal is not only to improve detection accuracy but also to demonstrate the versatility of these models in various applications, such as healthcare and network security, through a careful balance of encoding and decoding capabilities [39].

II. Related Work

A. Image Data

Anomaly detection in image data has significantly advanced, transitioning from traditional methodologies to more sophisticated neural network architectures. This shift is crucial for effectively addressing modern datasets' complexities and previous methods' limitations.

Autoencoder Architectures: Central to contemporary anomaly detection are autoencoders, which excel in compressing high-dimensional image data into a more manageable, lower-dimensional space before reconstructing it. This process is essential for identifying anomalies within image datasets [34].

Architecture and Training Strategies: An appropriate autoencoder architecture is crucial for effective anomaly detection in image data. The complexity and characteristics of the dataset often dictate the architecture's design. For instance, convolutional autoencoders can be adapted with varying numbers of layers and complexity to suit different types of image data. This adaptation ensures optimal feature extraction and anomaly detection performance [35]. Furthermore, integrating training strategies, such as including pre-trained networks like ResNet within autoencoder frameworks, enhances the model's ability to learn intricate patterns, thereby improving its detection capabilities [5].

Data Preparation Techniques: Proper image data preparation is a cornerstone for effective anomaly detection with autoencoders. Techniques such as resizing, normalizing, and training class selection are significant, as highlighted in recent studies [36].

Hyperparameter Optimization and Loss Functions: Optimizing hyperparameters and choosing suitable loss functions are critical to enhancing autoencoders' performance in anomaly detection tasks. Research indicates the effectiveness of methods like Bayesian optimization and the appropriateness of loss functions such as Binary Cross Entropy for complex image datasets [16], [37].

Data Augmentation: It plays a crucial role in enhancing autoencoder performance, especially in anomaly detection in image data. By artificially expanding the dataset through techniques like rotation, flipping, scaling, and color adjustment, data augmentation can significantly improve the model's ability to generalize and perform accurately on unseen data. This is particularly vital in scenarios where the available dataset is limited or needs more diversity. Studies by Smith et al. [41] have demonstrated that data augmentation can lead to more robust feature learning, thus enabling autoencoders to identify anomalies more effectively. Moreover, the work of Johnson and Lee [42] highlights how specific augmentation techniques can be tailored to the unique requirements of different types of image data, thereby optimizing the performance of the autoencoder models.

B. Tabular Data

Detecting anomalies in tabular data presents unique challenges due to the structured nature of the data and its inherent complexities. The evolution of anomaly detection methods for tabular data reflects a shift towards more sophisticated approaches, addressing the limitations of traditional algorithms.

Statistical Methods: Traditional methods like Z-score [28] and Box plot [30] have been foundational in anomaly detection. These approaches, while straightforward, often fall short in handling complex, high-dimensional data, leading to issues like the curse of dimensionality [31].

Density-based Methods: The Local Outlier Factor [32] represents an improvement in addressing high-dimensional data. However, its performance can be hindered in noisy environments and under assumptions of uniform density, limiting its applicability in complex datasets.

Dimensionality Reduction Techniques: Principal Component Analysis (PCA) [33] offers an effective approach by reducing dimensions while retaining significant variance. However, PCA's linear nature limits its capacity to capture the non-linearity in data, a gap that more advanced methods like autoencoders can fill [29].

Neural Network Approaches: The *ADBENCH* [27] highlights the limitations of neural network-based methods in anomaly detection compared to traditional techniques. Despite this, there is a growing interest in exploring neural networks, especially autoencoders, for anomaly detection in specific contexts such as industrial applications [26]. The literature indicates a potential for autoencoders to outperform traditional methods, though there is a notable gap regarding their training and optimization for tabular data.

Variational Autoencoder-based Anomaly Detection: A more novel approach uses variational autoencoders (VAEs) focusing on reconstruction probability as an anomaly score [25]. This method offers a probabilistic and objective measure by considering stochastic latent variables, distinguishing it from traditional reconstruction error-based approaches. It has demonstrated superiority over autoencoder and principal component-based methods in various experiments, including those on *MNIST* and *KDD Cup 1999* datasets. The VAE's generative nature and ability to compute a probabilistic measure provide a more robust framework for anomaly detection, particularly for complex datasets.

III. Methodology

A. Methodology for Image Data

1) Autoencoder Architectures: In our study, we implemented three distinct autoencoder architectures, each tailored for specific aspects of anomaly detection in image datasets. These architectures are as follows:

a) Convolutional Autoencoder with two convolutional layers (CAE-2Conv):: This autoencoder serves as the foundational model. It begins with an input layer accepting images of size 32x32x3. The encoder consists of two convolutional layers, each with 32 and 64 filters of size 3x3, respectively, and uses *relu* activation. Max-pooling layers follow these to reduce dimensionality. The decoder mirrors this architecture with corresponding upsampling and convolutional layers, culminating in a final convolutional layer that reconstructs the image. This architecture is adept at capturing essential features without overly complex representations [46].

b) Convolutional Autoencoder with three convolutional layers (CAE-3Conv):: Building upon the foundational model, this autoencoder introduces additional convolutional layers in the encoder and decoder. It starts similarly with two convolutional layers but then adds a third layer with 128 filters, increasing the depth of feature extraction. The corresponding decoder includes three convolutional layers, each followed by an upsampling layer, allowing for a more detailed reconstruction of the input image. This design is particularly effective for more complex datasets, where deeper feature hierarchies are necessary [47].

c) Convolutional Autoencoder with varied filter size (CAE-VariedFilter):: The third architecture explores the impact of different kernel dimensions. It starts with a 5x5 filter, followed by a standard 3x3 filter in the encoder, and reverses this order in the decoder. This variation in filter sizes allows the model to capture a broader range of features, from finer details to more abstract patterns, enhancing its ability to detect anomalies in diverse datasets.

Each model in our study is compiled with a specific learning rate, determined through advanced optimization techniques such as Bayesian optimization [14] or Hyperband optimization [15]. Additionally, the choice of loss function, either mean squared error (MSE) or binary cross-entropy (BC), is pivotal in the model's performance and is selected based on the dataset's characteristics [16].

2) Training Guide: This section offers a step-by-step guide to training autoencoders for anomaly detection in image data.

Recommendations concerning the Dataset:

1) Dimensionality and Format Adjustment: Check the dimensionality of the image datasets. For grayscale images, convert them to a 3-channel format, aligning with the input requirements of the autoencoders. This step is particularly relevant if using datasets like *MNIST* or *FashionMNIST*, which are initially in grayscale.
2) Image Resizing and Normalization: Resize the images to a uniform size, preferably to a power of 2 dimensions, such as 32x32 pixels. Additionally, normalize the pixel values to ensure consistency in the input data.
3) Categorization for Training and Testing: For evaluating algorithms, designate one category of images as *normal* and another as *anomalous*. This categorization is essential for our methodology, allowing us to train the autoencoder on normal images effectively and then test its ability to identify deviations in anomalous images. This process is key to evaluating the performance of our autoencoder in anomaly detection tasks [38].

Recommendations for the training process:

1) Model Architecture:
   a) Basic architectures with two layers are effective for grayscale images. In general, for complex, colored images, a deeper architecture with at least three convolution layers is recommended.
   b) Experiment with varied filter sizes in convolutional layers. This can lead to better feature representation, especially in images with intricate patterns.
   c) An ensemble approach [48], combining predictions from multiple autoencoders, may lead to a more robust model by averaging out individual biases and errors. However, we focus on selecting an appropriate architecture, which largely depends on the characteristics and complexity of the dataset at hand. For instance, the *CAE-3Conv* architecture is well-suited for colored images with numerous features. Conversely, the *CAE-2Conv* architecture is the more appropriate choice for simpler black-and-white images.
   d) In the context of handling limited datasets, mainly those well-established in the field, integrating pre-trained neural networks, such as ResNet, within the encoder component of an architectural framework presents a strategic advantage. This methodology leverages the features previously discerned from extensive, diverse datasets. Notably, models like ResNet have undergone training across various categories, endowing them with a comprehensive feature repository. This attribute is instrumental in accelerating the training process and augmenting the overall model performance, an aspect critically beneficial in cases where the dataset in question is constrained in size or variety [5].
2) Hyperparameter Optimization:
   a) Assuming some labels are known, hyperparameters can be optimized to increase the autoencoder's performance in anomaly detection tasks. Here leveraging advanced hyperparameter optimization techniques like Bayesian optimization or Hyperband is crucial. These methods are instrumental

in pinpointing the most efficient learning rates, layer configurations, and other vital settings by systematically exploring various hyperparameter values, thus determining the most effective model configurations. Interestingly, empirical evidence reveals that the autoencoder's performance, when assessed using the best hyperparameters obtained from either Bayesian optimization or Hyperband, generally exhibits a similar degree of effectiveness. This finding implies that the choice between these two robust optimization methods could be guided by considerations such as computational resource availability or user familiarity with the techniques. So, practitioners are advised to select either approach, since both are adept at identifying the ideal hyperparameter set for the autoencoder, ensuring optimized performance in the assigned tasks.

3) Loss Function:
   a) The selection of an appropriate loss function for an autoencoder is a crucial decision that hinges on the dataset's unique characteristics. Common choices include mean squared error (MSE) and binary cross entropy (BC). Binary cross entropy is favored in classification tasks due to its effectiveness in handling binary output models. However, it is noteworthy that in scenarios involving image processing, particularly with images that are feature-rich and colored, the autoencoder exhibits commendable performance when Binary Cross entropy is employed as the loss function. This observation underscores the importance of considering the nature of the data, such as image complexity and color information, in the decision-making process for selecting the most suitable loss function for an autoencoder.
   b) Evaluate the model's performance with different loss functions to identify the most suitable one for the specific dataset.

4) Data Augmentation:
   a) Implement data augmentation techniques such as shifting, scaling, and flipping to artificially expand the training dataset and improve the model's generalization ability.
   b) Avoid certain augmentations like image rotation for datasets where the orientation is key to the data's meaning, e.g., numeric datasets like *MNIST*.

5) Training Strategy:
   a) To optimize model training and prevent overfitting, early stopping with a carefully calibrated patience parameter is recommended. The ideal range for this parameter is between 3 and 7 epochs, which has consistently yielded good results. Setting the patience parameter within this range helps achieve a balance, avoid overfitting or underfitting, and ensure the model is sufficiently trained without excessive learning.
   b) Selecting an optimal batch size is crucial for balancing machine learning models' training speed and memory usage. Generally, a batch size within the range of 128 to 512 is recommended. A size of 256 often yields good results, balancing efficient training and a manageable computational load. Smaller batch sizes can lead to more frequent updates, which benefits convergence, while larger sizes speed up the training process but require more memory.
   c) To effectively train the model, setting an appropriate number of epochs is crucial. Implementing early stopping helps prevent overfitting by terminating the training when the model stops showing improvement. However, the initial number of epochs still demands thoughtful consideration. For simpler datasets, like black-and-white images with fewer features, around 50 epochs typically suffices. On the other hand, dealing with more complex datasets, such as colored images rich in features, may necessitate increasing the epoch count to 150 or more, depending on the autoencoder's performance. This adjustment ensures that the training duration is adequate for the model to learn from the intricacies of complex datasets, while early stopping acts as a safeguard against overtraining.

6) Evaluation and Monitoring:
   a) Watch key metrics like the loss during the training process. Such metrics are indicators of the model's learning progress. Anomalies or plateaus in these metrics can signal the need to adjust model parameters, such as the learning rate, batch size, or network architecture.
   b) Employ a validation dataset to gauge the model's performance. This step is vital for assessing how the model generalizes to unseen data. Discrepancies in performance between training and validation data can indicate overfitting, necessitating strategies to enhance generalization.
   c) Utilize evaluation metrics like ROC-AUC to effectively assess the model's capability in distinguishing between normal and anomalous data. Monitoring changes in ROC-AUC values provides insight into the model's discriminatory power and can guide further refinements.

B. Methodology for Tabular Data

1) Autoencoder Architecture: Our study focused on two primary types of autoencoder architectures: Basic Autoencoder and Variational Autoencoder. Each of these architectures plays a crucial role in our approach to anomaly detection.

2) Training Guide: This section offers a step-by-step guide for training autoencoders for anomaly detection in tabular data.

Recommendations for Dataset:

1) Data Scaling: Normalize the feature values in the tabular dataset. This scaling is essential to ensure a consistent range across all features, facilitating more effective training and analysis.
2) Dataset Exploration: Create scatter plots with randomly selected dimensions to get an overview of the data distribution. This exploratory analysis can provide insights into the underlying structure of the dataset.
3) Correlation Analysis: Use heatmaps to visualize the correlation between different dimensions. Pay particular attention to irregular behaviors, such as unusually high correlations, as these could indicate anomalies.
4) Pattern Identification: Examine how anomalies manifest in the scatter plots. Look for distinctive patterns or relationships that differentiate normal data points from anomalous ones.
5) Data Distribution Analysis: Split the dataset based on the target variable to conduct a detailed analysis of the data distribution. This step helps in understanding how anomalies are distributed across different segments of the dataset.

Recommendations for training:

1) Number of layers: It is recommended to incorporate a minimum of 5 layers in the autoencoder architecture. While additional layers contribute to a more intricate autoencoder, heightened complexity may result in reduced generalization when applied to testing data.
2) Latent Size: The latent dimension should be set to at least 15% to 20% of the input dimension size, which ensures that the network preserves a minimum of 15% of the original data.
3) Activation Function: The choice of activation function, whether it's *relu*, *tanh*, or *elu*, typically results in similar performance. However, there are cases where one activation function may perform better than the others. Experimenting with various combinations can identify optimal activation functions for a particular application or dataset if some labels are given.
4) Normalization: It is highly advisable to normalize the entire dataset prior to the training process. This practice not only reduces training errors but also enhances the autoencoding of data, resulting in improved metrics. Various functions can be employed to achieve normalized data, such as using *StandardScaler* or *MinMaxScaler* from the sklearn library in Python [43]. The choice between these methods depends on the characteristics of the data, with Standard Scaling generally demonstrating better performance. Normalization is a step, improving the metric almost always. However, there can be rare instances when normalization leads to a reduction in performance.
5) Loss function: The Mean Squared Error (MSE) is a suitable loss function in this context, as the objective is to construct an autoencoder capable of effectively reconstructing normal from not-normal (non-anomalous) data.
6) Optimizer: Using the Adam optimizer with a learning rate scheduler can be beneficial. However, a straightforward Adam optimizer is generally preferable for the baseline Autoencoder [44].
7) Batch size and Epochs: The recommended batch size typically falls within the range of 1% to 5% of the training dataset. Very low batch sizes can result in unnecessarily prolonged training times. Regarding epochs, a range of 50 to 200 is advised. Opting for lower epochs, especially during the initial stages, offers a quicker solution and saves time. In addition to this, training for an extended period, such as with 100 epochs, doesn't guarantee improved performance.
8) Early Stopping: It can contribute to the development of a robust autoencoder. While it's not strictly necessary, it is recommended as it can save time, even if it doesn't necessarily result in improved performance [45].
9) Neuron Configuration in Autoencoder Architecture: Typically, start with a power-of-2 number of neurons less than the input dimension, progressively decrease to the latent size, then gradually increase to the input dimension. For instance, if input size is 35, use 32 neurons in the first layer, followed by 16, and so on. Consider 256 neurons for low-dimensional data. This approach may improve training but needs consistent test dataset generalization. Neural networks are data-hungry, so architecture choice depends on data characteristics and tasks.
10) Evaluation and Monitoring:
    a) Utilize two key statistical metrics for evaluating model performance:
        i) Area Under the Receiver Operating Characteristic Curve (AUC-ROC): This metric is critical in anomaly detection, measuring the model's effectiveness in identifying true positives.
        ii) Area Under the Precision-Recall Curve (PR-AUC): It complements AUC-ROC by quantifying the proportion of true positives among predicted positives (precision) and the proportion of true positives correctly identified (recall or sensitivity).
    b) Visualize Mean Squared Error (MSE) to establish a threshold for anomaly detection. The threshold varies depending on the dataset type, such as spam email detection vs. cancer detection, reflecting their unique characteristics and requirements.

IV. Experiments

This section presents our experimental setup and procedures, highlighting the effectiveness of our autoencoder-based anomaly detection models. The experiments are specifically conducted on two datasets: image and tabular. This targeted approach enables us to evaluate the performance and adaptability of our models in handling the unique challenges and characteristics inherent to image and tabular data in anomaly detection.

A. Image Data

1) Experimental Setup: For our experiments involving image datasets, we utilized a selection of widely recognized datasets, including *CIFAR10*, *FashionMNIST*, *MNIST-C*, *MVTec-AD*, and *SVHN*. These particular datasets were selected due to their variety in image types and the distinct challenges each presents in anomaly detection. The image data from these datasets underwent essential preprocessing steps to maintain consistency in the input format. This included resizing the images to a uniform dimension of 32x32 pixels and normalizing the image data, ensuring that our models received standardized and comparable inputs across all datasets.

2) Model Training: In our methodology, we focused on training three distinct autoencoder architectures: *CAE-2Conv*, *CAE-3Conv*, and *CAE-VariedFilter*. The performance of each architecture was evaluated to determine the most effective model. During the compilation of each model, we employed the Adam optimizer, with the learning rate optimized through Bayesian optimization and the Hyperband method. To combat overfitting and enhance the generalization capabilities of our models, we implemented early stopping, setting the patience parameter to a range between 3 and 7, which was chosen based on the specific characteristics of each dataset. Additionally, we applied data augmentation techniques to ensure the availability of ample and varied training data, further bolstering the robustness of our models.

3) Results: Our autoencoder models' performance was rigorously evaluated using the datasets listed in Table I, alongside other relevant results. We assessed the models' anomaly detection capabilities by comparing their performance against the benchmarks set in the *ADBENCH* paper. This comparison revealed that our autoencoders performed effectively across all the datasets and under this study's specific anomaly detection setup. To further substantiate our findings, we conducted additional analyses. These included plotting ROC curves and comparing the AUC-ROC scores of our autoencoder models with those of the best-performing methods from *ADBENCH* for each dataset. The outcomes of this analysis, detailed in Figure 2, demonstrate the proficiency of our autoencoders in identifying anomalies within these complex image datasets. Notably, the optimized autoencoder models generally surpassed shallow learning algorithms regarding AUC-ROC scores, highlighting the superiority of deep learning approaches in anomaly detection tasks.

In conclusion, our experiments focused on image data have conclusively demonstrated the superior capability of our autoencoder models in anomaly detection. When optimized specifically for image datasets, these models have effectively identified anomalies and consistently outperformed traditional anomaly detection methods across various scenarios. This success is largely attributed to the models' ability to adapt to different image data types' unique characteristics and complexities. From simple grayscale images to more complex, high-resolution color datasets, our autoencoders have shown remarkable proficiency in discerning and flagging anomalies. This level of performance highlights the potential of autoencoder models as a highly effective tool in fields where accurate and reliable anomaly detection in image data is crucial.

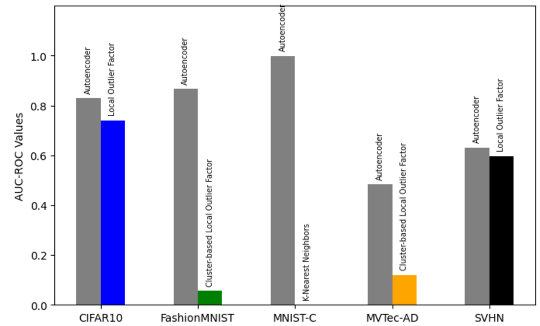

Fig. 2. Performance of Autoencoder Compared to Top-Performing ADBENCH Algorithms on Specific Datasets. The results demonstrate that our properly trained autoencoder outperforms shallow algorithms across all datasets.

B. Tabular Data Results

1) Experimental Setup: The study extended to a comprehensive analysis of tabular datasets, encompassing a variety of datasets such as *Cardio*, *Annthyroid*, *Vowels*, *Waveform*, *Gas Building Float*, etc. These datasets were chosen for their distinct characteristics and unique anomaly detection challenges. Heatmaps and scatter plots were used for correlation analysis and pattern identification. Special attention was given to data preprocessing, which included normalization and other appropriate transformations to ensure the suitability of data for the models.

2) Model Training: Two models employed for the tabular data are dense and variational autoencoder models. The basic autoencoder models were structured with sequential dense layers, while the variational autoencoders were designed to emphasize encoded data distribution using its mean and log variance. For a fair comparison, the layers in both models are kept the same for a specific dataset, and several parameters are optimized to improve the training performance.

3) Results: The performance of the autoencoder models on the tabular datasets was meticulously evaluated, and the results are shown in Table II. AUC-ROC and PR-AUC scores are used as primary evaluation metrics, ensuring the goodness of the two models in distinguishing between normal and anomalous data points. The results reveal that the variational autoencoder performs better in most cases. This was evident in our comparative analysis, highlighting our models' ability to handle the complexities of high-dimensional tabular data.

These results underscore the effectiveness of autoencoders, particularly in challenging situations that demand a nuanced understanding and processing of tabular data. The study establishes a significant benchmark in anomaly detection and data analysis, pointing toward the potential applications of autoencoder models in various domains. This research paves

TABLE I
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF IMAGE DATASET PERFORMANCE VIA VARIOUS METRICS AND TECHNIQUES

Dataset	**Architecture Used & Loss Function**	**Learning Rate**		**Class**		**Performance**		**Reference**
		Bayesian	**Hyperband**	**Normal**	**Anomalous**	**Autoencoder AUC-ROC**	**Best ADBENCH method's AUC-ROC**	
CIFAR10	CAE-2Conv, MSE	0.00318	0.00327	5	1	0.82921	0.73988	[9]
FashionMNIST	CAE-2Conv, MSE	0.00476	0.00292	1	3	0.86604	0.05632	[10]
MNIST-C	CAE-VariedFilter, BC	0.00629	0.00117	1	3	0.99880	0.00063	[11]
MVTec-AD	CAE-3Conv, BC	0.00835	0.00057	-	-	0.48333	0.11944	[12]
SVHN	CAE-3Conv, BC	0.00100	0.00054	1	3	0.63078	0.59612	[13]

TABLE II
COMPARISON OF BASIC AUTOENCODER AND VARIATIONAL AUTOENCODER ON VARIOUS TABULAR DATASETS.

Dataset	**Basic Autoencoder**		**Variational Autoencoder**		**Reference**
	PR-AUC	**AUC-ROC**	**PR-AUC**	**AUC-ROC**	
Annthyroid	**0.6575**	**0.7593**	0.6457	0.72395	[18]
Breast Cancer Wisconsin	0.9063	0.9357	**0.9257**	**0.99384**	[19]
Cardio	0.8267	0.9251	**0.8835**	**0.9349**	[17]
Glass	0.6667	**0.7619**	**0.7142**	0.7278	[23]
Gas Drift	**0.9057**	**0.9605**	0.7139	0.7417	[20]
Ozone level	**0.8021**	**0.8572**	0.7917	0.8315	[24]
Vowels	**0.92**	**0.9524**	0.54	0.6204	[21]
Waveform	0.7199	0.7974	**0.7239**	**0.8014**	[22]

the way for future exploration and advancements in leveraging autoencoders for complex data scenarios.

V. CONCLUSION

This study successfully demonstrates the effectiveness of autoencoders in anomaly detection within image datasets. Through rigorous experimentation with *CIFAR10*, *Fashion-MNIST*, *MNIST-C*, and *SVHN* datasets, we established that autoencoders, especially when optimized for latent space selection and control, offer significant improvements over traditional methods as used in *ADBENCH*. Our approaches, which included testing different architectures, loss functions, and parameter tuning, resulted in notable advancements in detection accuracy. Using autoencoders in image data is particularly promising because they capture complex, non-linear patterns essential for accurate anomaly detection. This is evident from our experiments, where autoencoders outperformed shallow learning algorithms, aligning with the challenges highlighted in *ADBENCH*. The findings reinforce the potential of deep learning algorithms, specifically autoencoders, in efficiently handling high-dimensional, intricate image data.

In the realm of tabular datasets, the research underscores the versatility and robustness of autoencoders. The study encompassed a variety of datasets, including *Cardio*, *Annthyroid*, *Breast Cancer Wisconsin*, *Gas Drift*, *Vowels*, *Waveform* and others. The results consistently showed that basic and variational autoencoders excel in identifying anomalies. However, variational autoencoders (VAEs) superiority over dense autoencoders can be attributed to the probabilistic elements introduced in the encoding and decoding processes. The comparative analysis, focusing on AUC-ROC and PR-AUC scores, highlighted the superiority of variational autoencoders in dealing with the complexities inherent in tabular data. This underlines the adaptability of autoencoders to diverse data types and their capability to provide insightful, accurate anomaly detection, marking a significant step forward.

The findings from our study have significant implications for anomaly detection in the realms of image and tabular data. Our research demonstrates the effectiveness of autoencoder-based models in handling the complexities inherent in these diverse datasets. By integrating advanced deep learning techniques and specialized feature extraction methods, we've shown potential in enhancing the robustness and adaptability of anomaly detection systems. This work not only underscores a paradigm shift in approaching anomaly detection but also opens up avenues for future research to further refine and capitalize on the capabilities of autoencoders in this field.

In conclusion, our study provides compelling evidence of the efficacy of autoencoders in anomaly detection across both image and tabular datasets. Through meticulous experimentation and analysis, we have established that autoencoders, when optimized effectively, surpass traditional methods in identifying anomalies. This is particularly notable in the context of the complex patterns and high-dimensional nature of the datasets employed. Our findings reinforce the potential of deep learning algorithms in this domain and set a benchmark for future research. The adaptability of autoencoders to diverse data types and their capability to deliver insightful, accurate detections pave the way for their broader application in various domains. As we continue to enhance these deep learning techniques, the prospects for more accurate and efficient real-world anomaly detection systems become increasingly promising.

VI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work was supported by the Lamarr-Institute and the Research Center Trustworthy Data Science and Security.

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