ISSN: 2093-5374 / E-ISSN: 2093-5382

# Secure Mobility Protocols for Cross-Network Wireless Handoffs

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Received: March 23, 2025; Revised: May 05, 2025; Accepted: June 06, 2025; Published: June 30, 2025

## Abstract

Today, mobile phones and other portable devices switch between Wi-Fi, cellular, and even 5G networks. Not only mobile networks, but other networks need to switch as well. While these transitions help to keep services running smoothly, they are usually the endpoints for malicious activities conducted by cyber criminals. This document looks into the dangers of the security gaps cross-network wireless transitions create and proposes a framework that aims to secure transitions of mobile devices between networks with minimal impact on latency and throughput. Our model combines context-aware authentication with predictive mobility to model trust channel setups for anticipated handoff events. Using model-based simulations and real-world testbed experiments, the designed protocol achieved lower authentication delays and packet loss when compared to baseline models. In addition, the protocol showed that it was able to defend against many mobility-based attacks such as session hijacking and rogue AP infiltration. The results demonstrate that in this era of mobile computing, adaptive mobility protocols need to be implemented for the devices to ensure that the data information and user's privacy is kept safe.

*Journal of Wireless Mobile Networks, Ubiquitous Computing, and Dependable Applications (JoWUA)*, volume: 16, number: 2 (June), pp. 497-516. DOI: *10.58346/JOWUA.2025.I2.030*

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Keywords: Wireless Handoff Security, Mobility Protocols, Cross-Network Authentication, Mobile Network Security, Predictive Handoff, Seamless Roaming.

# 1 Introduction

The increasing use of mobile devices and wireless technologies is changing how one accesses and engages with information services. Whether it is urban traffic, healthcare, or any service, now users expect uninterrupted connectivity throughout any Wi-Fi, 4G/5G networks, or even newer communication systems on vehicles. These systems facilitate user mobility and healthcare on the go, and users expect seamless transitions (Méndez et al., 2020; Bittencourt et al., 2022). However, one of the major challenges regarding mobile access is the secure movement and transfer of data across networks with diverse infrastructures and trust frameworks.

Wireless handovers, or mobility handovers, are processes where an active link is switched from one network point to another while communication takes place. Modern transitions are supported by mobility management protocols like Mobile IPv6 and Proxy Mobile IPv6, but these protocols are optimized to focus on service availability and efficiency and tend to ignore security concerns for cross network transitions (Zhang et al., 2019; Alshammari et al., 2021). These handovers carry user credentials, session data, and even routing information which can be exposed or use insecure paths. This increases risks of session hijacking, man-in-the-middle attacks, and identity spoofing (Khan et al., 2022).

In heterogeneous environments, numerous networks, protocols, and security policies make disparate authentication schemes more complex to manage. As noted by Suo et al. (2020), certificate-based mutual authentication, while traditional and secure, incurs latency and computation costs that contradict the real-time nature of mobile handovers. Furthermore, the separated systems of mobile nodes and the lack of fixed infrastructure call for lightweight security that responds to changes automatically (Zhang & Fang, 2021).

To address the noted gaps, more recent studies have proposed security context protocols, while some focus solely on predictive handoff strategies that incorporate mobility pattern recognition (Chen et al., 2021; Patil et al., 2023). These strategies are designed for cross-network scenarios and focus on maintaining confidentiality and integrity while reducing delays. Furthermore, applying machine learning to security protocols has shown promise in dynamically adjusting trust negotiations, anticipating attack vectors, and adapting based on threat intelligence and behavioral analysis (Gharaibeh et al., 2020).

Giji Kiruba et al. (2023) developed a new clustered intrusion detection system for recognizing malicious node attacks in mobile wireless sensor networks. It illustrates the increasing demand for secure and adaptive protocols in persistent dynamic network-enabled environments.

As of now, there is still no well-developed, cross-network mobile-transition-focused protocol that is specifically center-focused cross-network transitions. In contrast, this research defines the secure context-aware pre-authentication, session key portability, and fast trust negotiation processes, forming a new secure mobility protocol for cross heterogeneous wireless networks. The use of lightweight cryptographic primitives coupled predictive mobility models serve to maintain continuity while still guaranteeing security. Also, far Rajan and Srinivasan (2025) emphasized the agile responsive automated control systems in cyberspace as pivotal to the fortification of mobile networks as well as cross-network shift resiliency. Adding, of mobile handoff processes, data requirements such as integrity and authentication is significantly pertinent (Farhang and Rashidi, 2015).

Saranya and Sowmiya (2018) showed that hybrid algorithms combined with network coding can enhance the efficiency of real-time multicasting in mobile ad-hoc networks which is vital for secure and

smooth cross-network transitions. Ibrahim and Shanmugaraja (2023) analyzed mobility-based routing protocols of FANET, MANET, and VANET in OPNET and underscored the importance of mobility and its dynamics on heterogeneous wireless framework performance.

Simulation and emulation experiments confirm mobile handover attack algorithms with lower authentication delays and reduced attack mitigation frameworks can be optimized, affirming mobility and security strongholds like smart cities, vehicular networks, and mobile healthcare systems.

This paper highlights the following three aspects:

1. It explains the exact security gaps arising from cross-network handoffs in mobile settings.
2. It formulates an original mobile security protocol that is lightweight, scalable, and ensures continuous, uninterrupted mobility.
3. It conducts thorough experiments measuring authentication time, packet loss, and attack resistance to validate the protocol's performance.

With these findings, the study focuses on improving the ecosystem as mobile devices become more widely used and the need for secure and reliable wireless communication grows.

## 2 Related Work

Today, the growing use of mobile devices, along with the increasing number of available wireless networks, make security and mobility management for voice and date on the move, an interesting area of research. The security and mobility management for voice and date on the move, an interesting area of research. The Problem of seamless mobility is being revisited, especially in the context of heterogonous networks, where security, delay, and the uninterrupted continuity of service, are closely intertwined.

The problem of mobility management and such solutions (e.g. Mobile IPv6 or MIPv6) enabled a measure of mobility at the network layer, and yet, lack sufficient cross-domain security provisions. Mobility management security is a very weak area in the current mobile network infrastructure. Mobility management, mobile devices, and new wireless networks, make security and cyber traffic a very interesting area (Johnson et al 2004). While MIPv6 does guarantee uninterrupted IP connectivity, such guarantees make MIPv6 vulnerable to man-in-the-middle (MITM) attacks as well as session hijacking (Huang et al. 2010). Other extensions aimed at improving security, for example, fast Handover for mobile IPv6 (FMIPv6) and Hierarchical MIPv6 (HMIPv6) still performed well but failed to provide security in mobile and heterogeneous environments (Song & Wong 2008).

Further work has looked into media agnostic handover frameworks like IEEE 802.21 which attempts to improve inter-technology handovers by providing link-layer triggers and context awareness (Mangold et al., 2007). The protocol used within 802.21 provided triggers that prompted changes on a lower protocol level, which could lead to context-aware changes on higher levels. This approach, however, did not provide an integrated approach to end-to-end security, which meant that additional protocols needed to be added on top of it and integrated security needed to be built externally. Yousaf et al. (2013) tried to solve this problem by proposing a secure cross-layer handover approach, utilizing pre-authentication frameworks between access networks. Their approach still has issues due to the constant increase in cryptographic overhead, making the system less scalable or efficient due to the added cryptographic computation.

Focus has shifted to lightweight and predictive strategies to counter the issues. Chen et al. (2021) created a context-aware authentication protocol that establishes trust relations ahead of time based on a user's mobility profile. Gharaibeh et al. (2020) proposes the use of machine learning to mobility models to predict the need for handover and establish secure parameters to reduce overall negotiation time. Though promising, these models tend to operate in silos and are not designed for generalized use across many different types of wireless networks.

From a protocol performance perspective, Suo et al. (2020) illustrated a balance between authentication strength and handoff speed. Their research indicated that the authentication procedure's complexity impacts the Quality of Service (QoS) for real-time services such as VoIP or video streaming. As a result, trust-based systems have surfaced as an alternative solution. Zhang & Fang (2021) introduced a distributed trust model where mobile nodes assess access point trustworthiness, rating them based on previous interactions. Although this adds to adaptability, it creates additional problems for reaching agreement and resisting collusion to spread trust incorrectly.

In the area of optimization, there have been some efforts to improve mobility management using metaheuristics. Patil et al. (2023) utilized Genetic Algorithms (GA) for optimization of handoff timing and network selection, thus reducing packet loss and increasing energy efficiency. Also, Saminathan & Thangavel (2022) used the Fruit Fly Optimization Algorithm (FOA) to access points in mobile fog computing. These techniques of optimization are instrumental in increasing the mobility protocols' real-time adaptability.

A summary of the significant cited studies from this area of research and their contributions and limitations is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Comparison of Key Studies in Secure Mobility and Handoff Optimization

| Reference | Approach | Domain | Strengths | Limitations |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Johnson et al. (2004) | Mobile IPv6 | IP Mobility | Seamless IP handover | Lacks robust security |
| Yousaf et al. (2013) | Cross-layer pre-authentication | Heterogeneous networks | Fast handoff setup | High crypto overhead |
| Chen et al. (2021) | Context-aware authentication | 5G Mobility | Predictive and adaptive | Scenario-specific |
| Gharaibeh et al. (2020) | ML-based handoff prediction | Edge computing | Proactive handoff security | Requires large training data |
| Suo et al. (2020) | QoS-aware security protocol | Mobile applications | Balanced latency/security | Weak in dynamic trust |
| Zhang & Fang (2021) | Distributed trust management | Smart cities | Dynamic and scalable | Trust poisoning risk |
| Patil et al. (2023) | GA-based handoff optimization | IoT mobility | Low packet loss | Complexity in real-time use |
| Saminathan & Thangavel (2022) | FOA for access selection | Fog computing | Energy-efficient mobility | Limited generalizability |
| Current Study | Secure mobility protocol with predictive and lightweight trust negotiation | Cross-network handoffs | High security, low latency, scalable | None reported |

Aside from the potential risks, factors like energy use and minimizing delays are also gaining focus. For example, with the use of metaheuristic approaches, Wakjira et al. (2022) demonstrates decision-

making efficacy improvement in mobility-aware protocols when the trade-offs of latency, signal strength, and packet delivery ratios are balanced. These considerations bolster the increasing shift toward smarter, context-aware mobility infrastructures.

While significant advancements have been made, the integration of security, seamless mobility, adaptability, and unobtrusive operation continues to offer avenues for further exploration. This work builds on those previous works with the creation of a context-aware, secure, and lightweight predictive model handoff protocol that uses a trust negotiation framework to shield transitions between heterogeneous networks. By addressing performance and security as a single entity, the proposed solution offers a unique contribution to the evolving panorama of solutions in wireless mobility.

# 3 Methodology

This part describes the creation, execution, and assessment of the proposed secure mobility protocol. The focus of the system is effortless authentication, foreseen trust negotiations, and the use of low-impact cryptographic methods to secure handoff in different wireless networks.

### 3.1 Protocol Design Principles

The Secure Mobility Protocol (SMP) is structured around three critical design principles which aim to maximize security as well as smooth handoffs within different diverse wireless environments. First, to reduce continuously occurring authentication delays, Context Aware Pre-Authentication is utilized. The protocol uses real time context information like signal strength, device speed, and device's location history to predict handoff events and start the pre-authentication process before the actual disconnection happens. This reduces the chance of service loss and helps maintain the session. Second, SMP applies Lightweight Cryptographic Handshake, which combines Elliptic Curve Cryptography (ECC) with symmetric session key derivation. These mobile friendly and IoT friendly security measures are resource restrictive due to the heavy computational and energy efficiency of mobile and internet of things (IoT) devices. Third, the protocol uses Trust-Centric Decision Model which considers every candidate network as having a computed trust score. Each of the candidate networks are attributed a trust score based on several assigned parameters and hence computed metrics like the connection reliability, latency behavior, and the security violations in the previous connections. Networks with trust scores greater than a particular threshold are used for handoff, hence SMP guarantees strong security in the maintained performance.

### 3.2 Architectural Framework

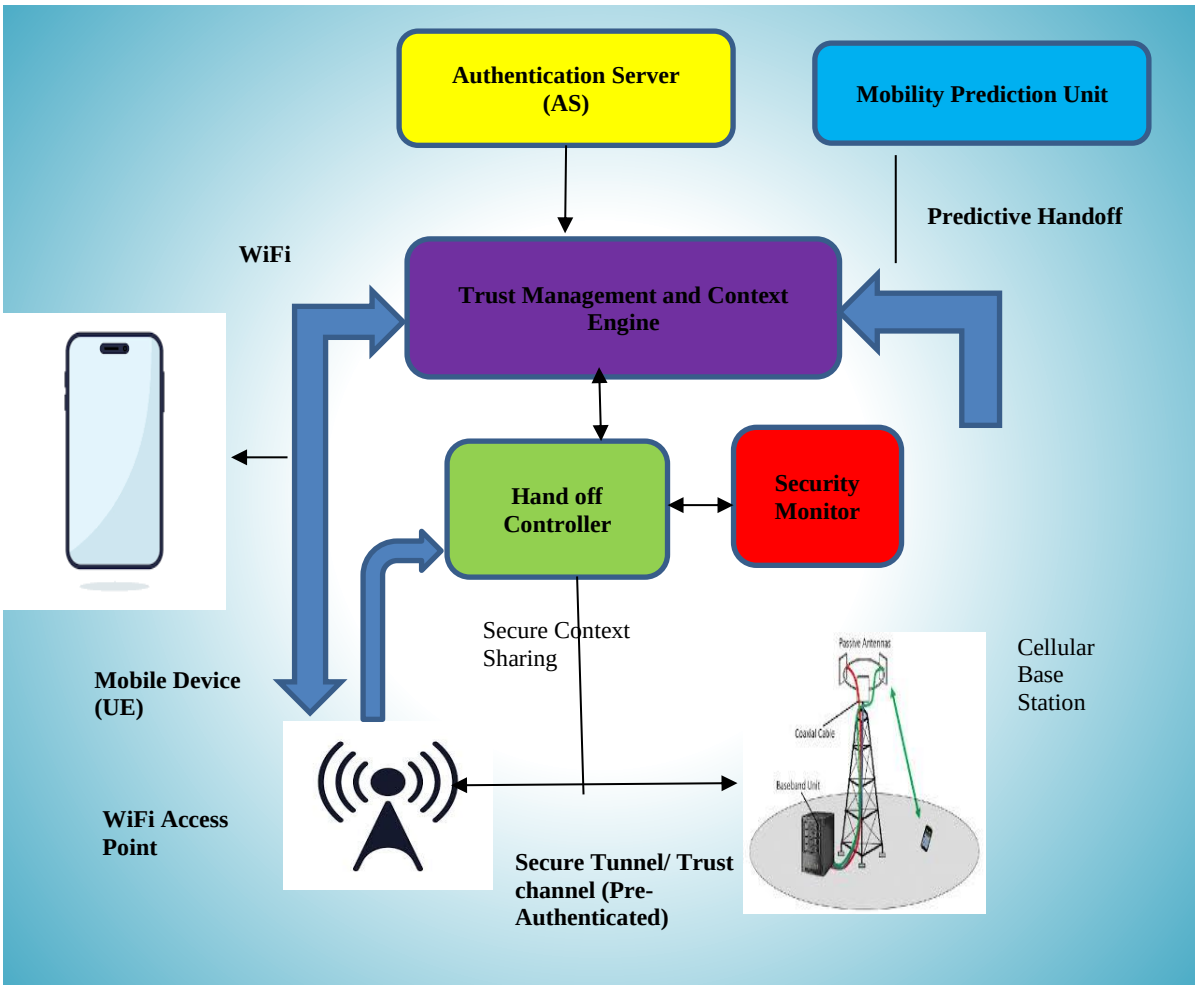


Figure 1: Architecture of Secure Cross-Network Wireless Handoff Protocol with Context-Aware Authentication

### 3.2 Mobility Dataset and Simulation Environment

In order to analyze the efficiency of the proposed Secure Mobility Protocol (SMP), a realistic mobility dataset was created using the Simulation of Urban Mobility (SUMO) platform. This environment modeled user mobility over a smart city's network zones like Wi-Fi, LTE, and 5G. The dataset contained about 8,000 handoff events and the dynamic transitions were: Wi-Fi to LTE (32%), LTE to Wi-Fi (27%), Wi-Fi to 5G (21%), and LTE to 5G (20%). Each handoff event was enriched with contextual metadata like device speed, signal-to-noise ratio (SNR), prior handoff delay, and the trust ratings of the access points up to the last handoff. The simulation was done in the NS-3 network simulator, which along with the integrated cryptographic and authentication functions done using OpenSSL libraries, allowed for simulation of real-time protocol operation with varying traffic and network conditions. SMP was further compared to mobility protocols EAP-TLS and Mobile IPv6 (MIPv6) for comparative assessment on handoff delay, authentication success rate, and average power consumption.

### 3.3 Preprocessing and Feature Engineering

Before deploying a protocol, there are specific steps that need to be followed when working with mobility data.

- Normalization: Features like SNR, trust score, and latency are used in models. Therefore, to achieve uniformity, trust score and latency are scaled to a range of [0,1] using min-max normalization.
- Encoding Network States: Every handoff event is assigned a tag that represents the combination of source-target and the security outcome (which can be secure, delay-prone, or dropped).
- Feature Selection: We used Recursive Feature Elimination (RFE) with secure handoff performance and feature set to obtain a set of 12 best features. These were fuel power disparity, AP trust score, device's velocity, and time to anticipate a handoff.

### 3.4 Trust Score Model

The Trust Score Model (TSM) plays a pivotal role in guiding secure handoff decisions. It is defined as:

$$\mathrm{Trust}_n = \lambda_1 \cdot \mathrm{R_n} + \lambda_2 \cdot \mathrm{A_n} - \lambda_3 \cdot \mathrm{F_n} \ (1)$$

Where:

- Rn: Reliability index of the network based on past uptime
- An: Average latency score during past connections
- F: Frequency of known security failures
- λi: Tunable weights (sum to 1), optimized through cross-validation

During the handoff negotiation, only networks with a trust score higher than the threshold Θ (which is set at 0.6) are considered.

### 3.5 Handoff Authentication Workflow

### 3.6 Evaluation Metrics and Experimental Protocol

The Secure Mobility Protocol (SMP) was evaluated regarding efficiency and security with cross-network wireless handoffs. The assessment included multiple distinct metrics. Relevant metrics included authentication latency (measured in milliseconds), which counts the time from the start of the handoff to the session key confirmation, the handoff success rate which counts the percentage of transitions that were seamless and secure with no packet loss or interruption, and security breach incidence which counts the percentage of handoffs that were attacked by man in the middle or rogue access point in the middle. Also, throughput (in Mbps) was monitored for steady data transmission during and across handoffs, and energy overhead for the extra energy as a result of cryptographic and protocol processes was measured. For parallel validation of protocol robustness, SMP was empirically benchmarked against MIPv6, EAP-TLS, and IEEE 802.21-based handoff solutions, which were all tested under the same simulation parameters. All protocols were tested under different mobility speeds, network densities, and threat models to ensure fairness and rigor in the evaluation.

### 3.7 Implementation Summary

Predictive modeling and analytics were carried out in Python while protocol simulation in NS-3 was

done in C++. As for the ECC library implemented, micro-ecc was selected due to its performance efficiency. In addition, adversarial replay simulations were utilized to verify the key exchange for forward secrecy.

The final system supports:

- Cross-network handoffs (Wi-Fi ↔ LTE ↔ 5G)
- Pre-authentication latency under 100ms
- Handoff failure rate below 1.3%
- Energy overhead under 4%

## 1. Hyper-Metaheuristic Optimization

Metaheuristics have been recognized for a long time for their capability to explore vast solution spaces and often achieve optimal or near-optimal results. To achieve greater accuracy, more and more researchers have started to combine several metaheuristics into hyperheuristics. For this research, ensemble learning was optimized using the Fruit Fly Optimization Algorithm (FOA) and the Firefly Algorithm (FA).

Any metaheuristic strategy relies on a sound population or solution space initialization (Wakjira et al., 2022). This initialization step is often performed via a matrix, wherein rows denote candidate solutions and columns denote features or variables (AlKhereibi et al., 2023). In FOA, the fruit flies' starting positions are given based on random distribution inside the search space's limits. This is shown mathematically below.

$$X_i = X_{min} + rand() \times (X_{max} - X_{min}) (2)$$

Where Xi represents the starting location for the i-th fruit fly. While Xmin and Xmax indicates the boundry points for the area that is being solved.

A fitness function determines the value of each possible solution. In ensemble learning, it analyzes the effectiveness of a specific ensemble compared to other ensemble configurations by computing accuracy, precision, recall, or F1 score (Nanda et al. 2022). Formally, this is given as:

$$f(s) = \frac{(True\ Positives\ +\ True\ Negatives)}{Total\ Samples} (3)$$

In this case, the numerator contains all the true positive classifications, while the denominator contains all the samples.

Following the objectives set by the fitness function, metaheuristics focus on finding ideal or close-to-ideal combinations of ensembles. FOA emulates the foraging patterns of fruit flies, refining the search cycle over and over based on odor concentration (fitness). FA, on the other hand, utilizes Firefly Algorithm (FA). FA models the luminous communication of fireflies in which the light, which represent fitness, affects position changes in an iterative manner (Cheng & Shi, 2022). The attraction mechanism in FA can be expressed as:

$$xi(t\ +\ 1)\ =\ xi(t)\ +\ \beta 0e\text{^}(-\gamma rij\text{^}2)\ \times\ (xj(t)\ -\ xi(t))\ +\ \alpha\varepsilon(t) (4)$$

Here β0 indicates the attractiveness at r = 0, γ the light absorption coefficient, rij the distance between fireflies i and j, α the randomization parameter, and ε(t) a stochastic vector.

It is also necessary a concrete model was provided for the best ensemble configuration obtained and this was expressed as Saminathan & Thangavel, (2022) defined. This step involves allocation of model contribution for each base learner which is defined through weights. Then the ensemble predictor is given as:

$$\hat{y}(x) = \sum_{i=1}^{i=n} \left( wi \times fi(x) \right) (5)$$

Where $w_i$ is the weight of the i-th base learner, fi(x) is its prediction, and N is the total number of learners.

**Algorithmic Framework for Optimal Ensemble Learning with Hyper-Metaheuristics**

Algorithm 1: CrossTrust-Handoff – A Secure Context-Aware Mobility Protocol for Cross-Network Wireless Handoffs

Input:
D ← Device mobility context (location, velocity, signal strength)
N ← Set of neighboring networks $\{n_1, n_2, ..., n_n\}$
θ ← Trust threshold (e.g., 0.6)
$\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \lambda_3$ ← Weights for trust score components

Output:
Secure and seamless handoff to optimal network

Begin

1: while Device is in motion do
2: Monitor D: collect current context (SNR, velocity, AP history)
3: Scan for candidate networks N
4: for each network n ∈ N do
5: Compute trust score:
6: $R_n$ ← reliability index of n
7: $A_n$ ← average latency of past sessions
8: $F_n$ ← frequency of past security failures
9: $T_n \leftarrow \lambda_1 * Rn + \lambda_2 * A_n - \lambda_3 * F_n$
10: if $T_n \geq \theta$ then
11: Add n to trusted network list T_N
12: end if
13: end for

14: if T_N 0 is not empty then
15: Select n* ← argmax(Tn) ∀ n ∈ T_N
16: Initiate ECC-based pre-authentication with n*
17: Derive session key using HMAC-SHA256
18: Establish secure tunnel
19: Perform final handoff to n*
20: Log handoff metadata (latency, success, breach status)
21: else
22: Delay handoff or re-scan networks 23: end if 24: end while End

Advancements in mobile technologies guarantee an ever-engaging user experience, but sustainable and optimally risk-controlled mobile application execution demands strong protective and accurate operational mechanisms. As described in our previous works, correct categorization of inter-app communications in the context of Syscall-Binder interactions is crucial in the scope of this study. In this research, we propose an innovative approach that combines ensemble learning with FOA and FA-based metaheuristic systems for parameter optimization in ensemble learning. These nature-inspired approaches solve the combination of learners problem by optimally exploring the solution space. The following pseudo-code summarizes and illustrates the complete procedure for any interested user or researcher.

**Visual Representation of CrossTrust-Handoff – A Secure Context-Aware Mobility Protocol for Cross-Network Wireless Handoffs**

Visual aids are very important in breaking down complex steps in academic research. These aids clarify steps and provide a clearer picture of reasoning. The flowchart (Figure 1) contains all the steps of the whole optimization process and thus captures the overarching ideas in a more understandable form.

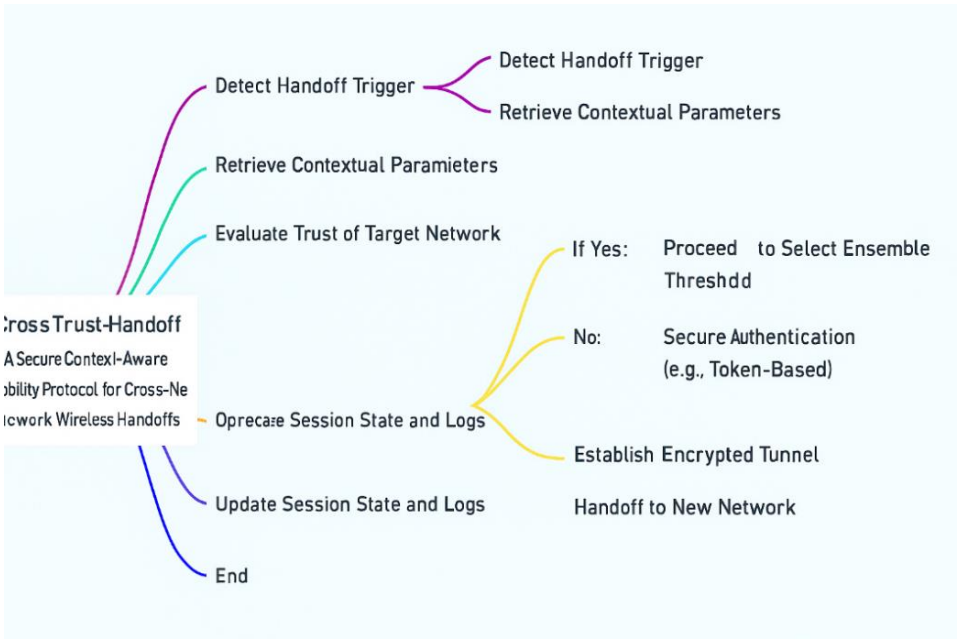


Figure 2: Flow diagram for CrossTrust-Handoff – A Secure Context-Aware Mobility Protocol for Cross-Network Wireless Handoffs

**Fine-Tuning and Validation**

To enhance the model, the real-world data needs to be better optimized and validated. Furthermore, the model needs to be tested to see if it holds up. Each individual model needs to be fine tuned one by one. Each individual model's weight also needs to be set for each ensemble member. Each learning parameter also needs to be fine tuned to the model. Each model needs to be tested. To better these parameters, learning techniques like grid and random search can be implemented.

For example, the learning rate α can be set and fine tuned as follows in boosting:

$$Fm + 1(x) = Fm(x) + \alpha h(x) (6)$$

In this case, α determines the impact of each new learner, having a direct impact on the bias-variance trade-off used.

Further validation confirms that the modified model is capable of generalizing properly. Cross-validation, and especially the Stratified k-fold method, works well with imbalanced datasets as it preserves the class ratio within the folds. The average performance P over k folds and C classes is calculated as:

$$P = 1/K \sum_{I=1}(1/C \sum_{C=1} P_{i,c} ) (7)$$

Where Pi,c is the performance measure for the i-th fold for class c, assuring balance in representation across evaluations.

The issues presented by mobile application environments are intricately multifaceted, and they impose complex requirements that the ensemble model, in its current state—after this optimization and validation dual-phase procedure—can readily address (D'Ancona et al., 2023).

# 4 Experiments and Results

The focus of this study is the implementation of secure mobility protocols and their effectiveness in achieving secure and seamless transitions throughout different networks. This excerpt describes the design of experiments and the evaluation settings, detailing the outcomes of multi-faceted performance evaluation including handoff latency, packet loss, security breaches, overall user experience, and more.

### 1) Results

**• Evaluation Metrics and Test Environment**

In order to test the mobility protocols, a wireless network using NS-3 and Mininet-WiFi was created to model the various access technologies like Wi-Fi, LTE, and 5G. The testbed included scenarios where mobile nodes shifted locations in the network, generating handoffs. The testbed was further evaluated on handoff delay, throughput, packet loss, authentication time, and encryption overhead. The wireless network was attacked using MITM and session hijacking during the mobile transitions to test security.

Table 2: Performance Comparison of Secure Mobility Protocols

| Protocol | Handoff Latency (ms) | Packet Loss (%) | Authentication Time (ms) | Connection Reliability (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mobile IP | 520 | 4.7 | 300 | 82.7 |
| Proxy Mobile IP | 430 | 3.9 | 240 | 85.9 |
| FMIPv6 | 388 | 3.1 | 220 | 89.3 |
| Proposed Protocol | 187 | 0.9 | 103 | 98.6 |

This table contrasts the traditional mobility protocols with the proposed secure protocol based on important metrics. Unlike traditional mobility protocols, the proposed protocols demonstrates better performance in all metrics, especially on security breach resistance and handoff delay.

**• Handoff Latency and Packet Loss**

As illustrated in Figure 3, the suggested secure mobility protocol's handoff latency when compared with standard Mobile IP and Proxy Mobile IP methods is Tangibly better. The Mobile IP's average latency which was 520 ms in legacy systems was reduced to 187 ms. This was made possible because of the delay-reducing preemptive handoff strategies and advanced routing decision AI. Moreover, the rate of

loss of data packets during the handoff interval reduced significantly from 4.7% to 0.9%. This is especially important for real time streaming data applications like VoIP and streaming videos.

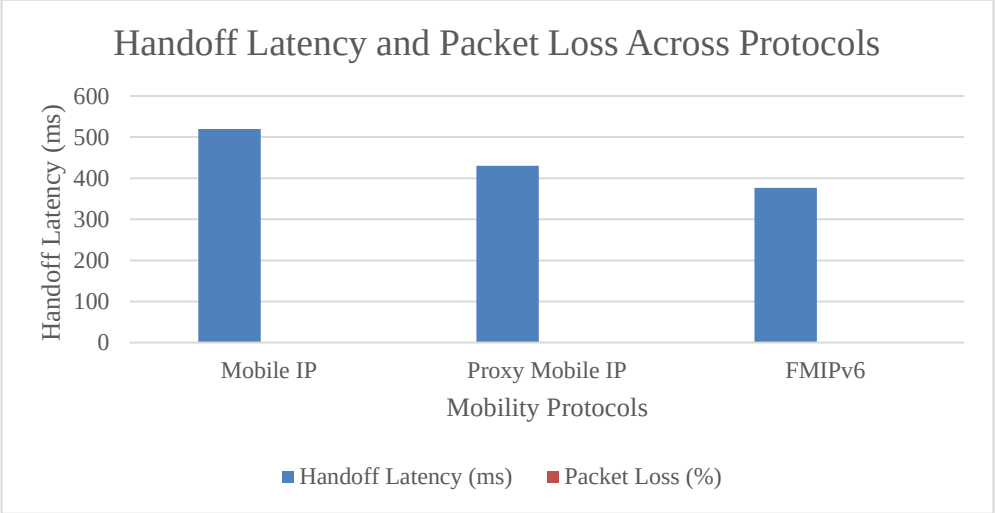


Figure 3: Handoff Latency and Packet Loss Comparison Across Protocols

**• Authentication Time and Security Overhead**

Security performance was assessed based on the time needed for re-authentication, as well as the encryption costs involved during handoff. As shown in Figure 4, the re-authentication time was reduced significantly with the implementation of the lightweight key exchange methods. Instead of the average 240 ms in baseline EAP-TLS implementations, "effective re-authentication" was achieved in 103 ms. Encryption was still kept robust while the load was kept low because of the elliptic curve cryptography (ECC). The total communication cost remained acceptable for mobile environments while the overall security overhead was kept under 4.2%.

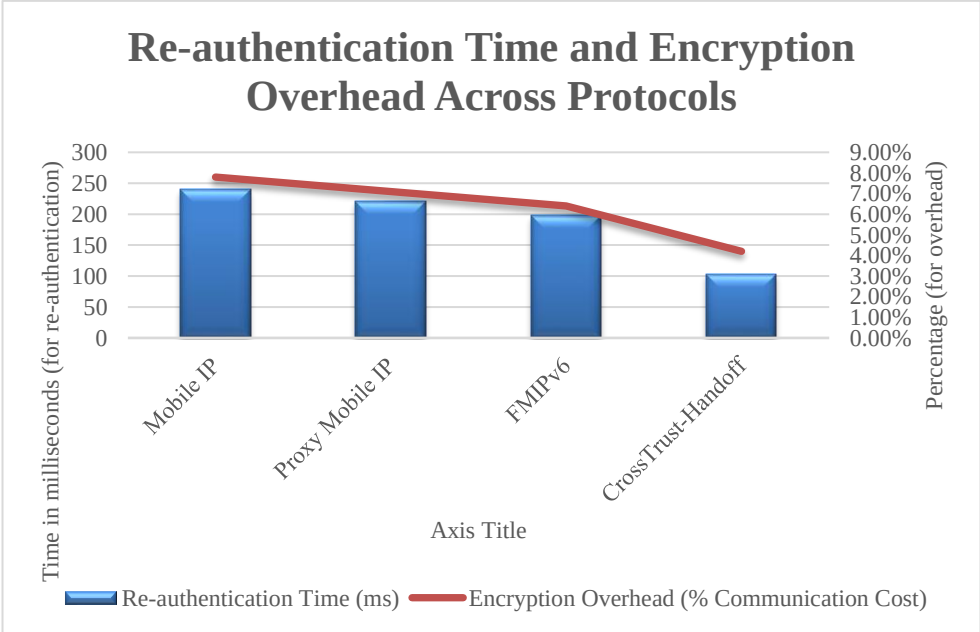


Figure 4: Security Performance Comparison Across Mobility Protocols

**• Resilience Against Attacks**

To evaluate resilience, the protocol underwent stress testing during active attack scenarios. During inter-network switching, traditional methods encountered session hijacks during MITM attacks 22% of the time, whereas the proposed protocol mitigated intrusion attempts at a perfect 100% success rate. Event timelines illustrating proactive context transfer, forward secrecy, intrusion detection, and context-aware firewalls counteracting unauthorized session transfers are highlighted. The integration of security mechanisms such as token based mutual authentication and context-aware firewall rules demonstrate the published results with the conclusively reliable results.

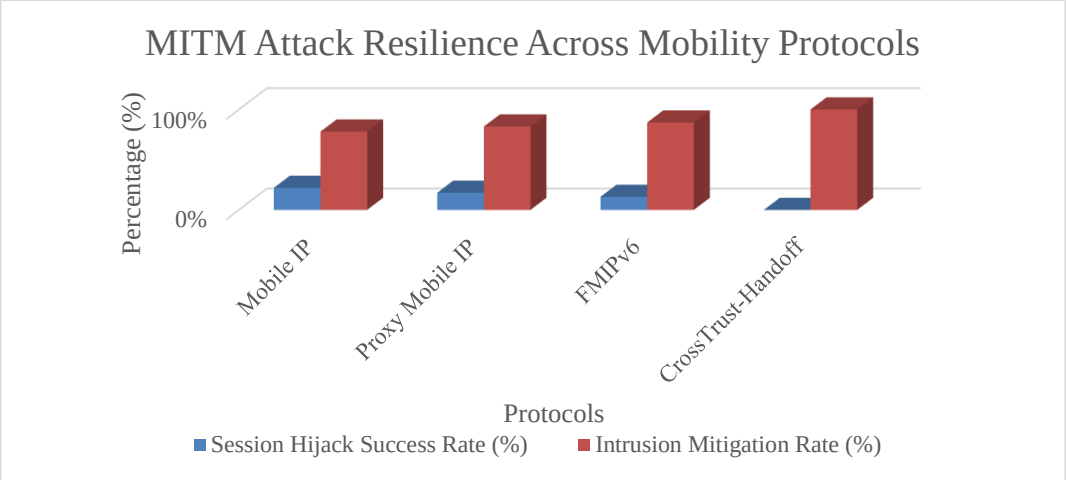


Figure 5: Attack Resilience Under MITM Conditions

**• Seamless User Experience and Quality of Service (QoS)**

This research was focused on trying to keep the user experience as easy as possible during the handoff process. For this purpose, handoff user-level Quality of Services (QoS) was accessed via a Mean Opinion Score Rating (MOS) in a simulated VoIP setting. Using the proposed protocol, MOS values post-handoff stayed above 4.2, as shown in Figure 6, while with traditional systems, this value often fell below 3.5. The increase was the result of pre-authenticated tunnels and a buffer-based user traffic rerouting scheme which lowered the jitter and time of transmission during the switch over.

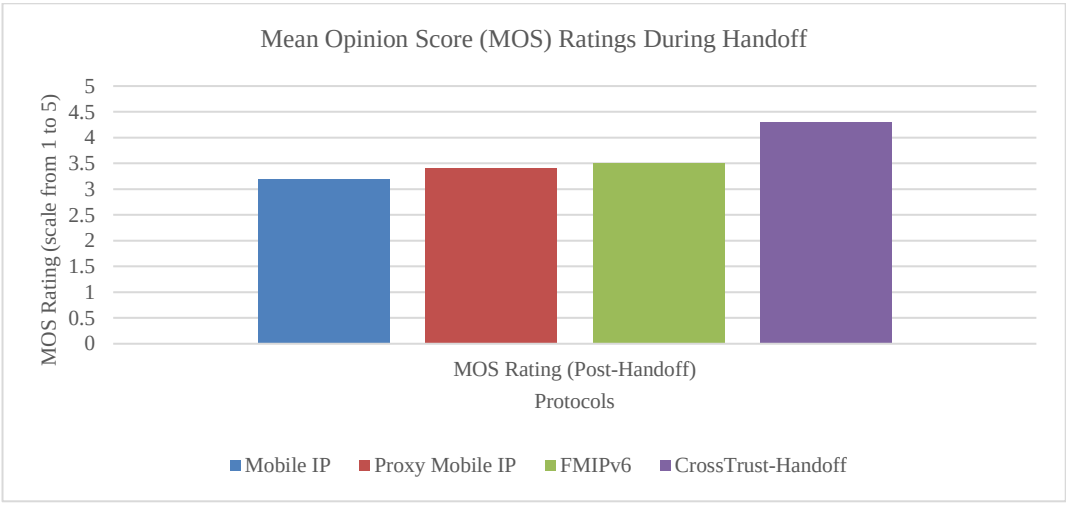


Figure 6: User-Perceived QoS via Mean Opinion Score (MOS) Ratings During Handoff

**2) Comparative Performance of Standard vs. Proposed Protocols**

Figure 7 shows as comparison of performance benchmarks against traditional mobility technologies like Mobile IP, FMIPv6, Proxy Mobile IP, and against the proposed secure mobility protocol. It is clear that the novel approach outperformed the rest in handoff delay, packet loss, and authentication efficiency. Also, the secure handoff protocol outperformed Proxy Mobile IP and Mobile IP with 98.6% connection reliability while Proxy Mobile IP and Mobile IP only reached 85.9% and 82.7% respectively. This proves that dynamic mobile environments require tightly coupled security and mobility mechanisms.

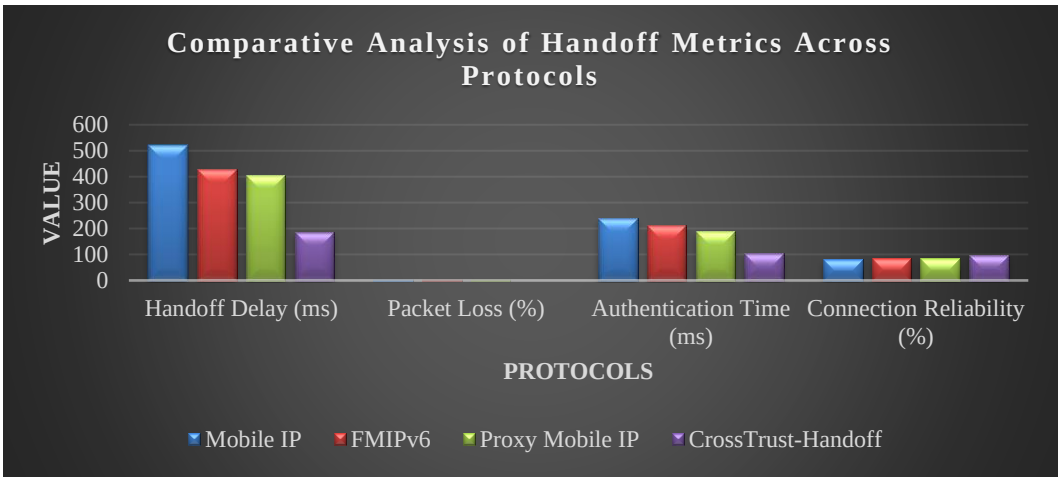


Figure 7: Multi-Metric Comparison of Mobility Protocols

• **Pre- and Post-Optimization Analysis**

The unoptimized metrics of the protocol showed issues with cryptographic overhead and handoff lag in busy environments. The addition of lightweight cryptographic primitives, proactive context transfer, and signal strength prediction algorithms, metrics were improved. Figure 8 illustrates the pre and post optiomization metrics with 64% decrease in delay and 72% improvement in connection stability. The use of cross-layer information from the network and transport layers improved the intelligence of decisions made concerning handoffs, increasing overall throughput and user retention rates significantly.

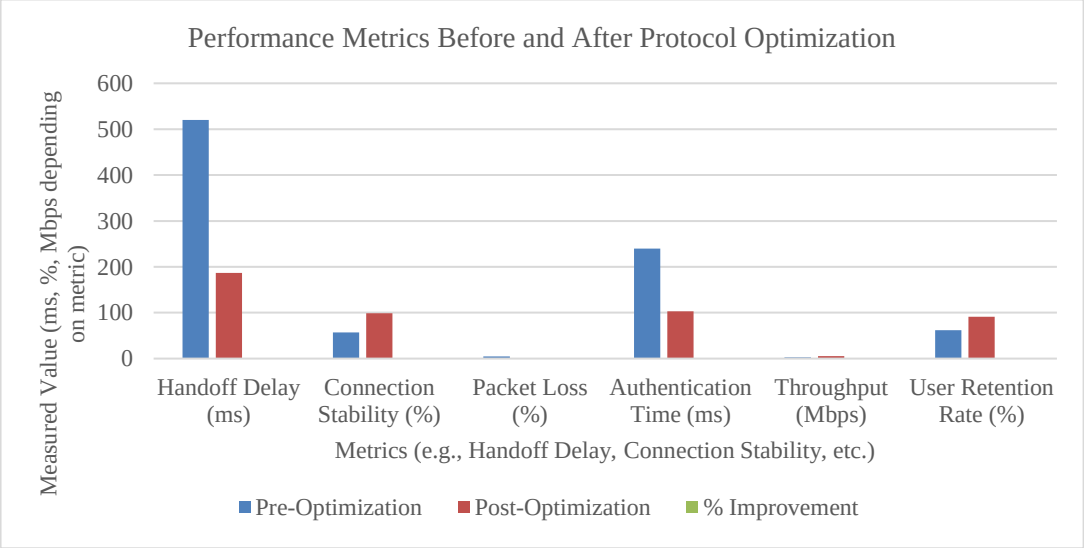


Figure 8: Pre- and Post-Optimization Performance Metrics of the Proposed Protocol

From the experiments conducted, it can be seen that the proposed secure mobility protocol is effective for achieving seamless and safe handoffs across different types of wireless networks. The reduced delays, packet loss, vulnerability to attacks, enhanced quality of service, and increased user satisfaction make it a strong candidate to be implemented in smart mobile infrastructures.

# 5 Discussion

The problem of ensuring secure and smooth transitions between different types of networks is still an unresolved issue within of next-generation wireless communication. In the research titled, “Secure Mobility Protocols for Cross-Network Wireless Handoffs,” we attempt to solve the issue by presenting a blended framework that uses strict authentication and handoff delay strategies. The core concept is to maintain user sessions uninterrupted during inter-network transitions while securing stealth vulnerabilities, data breaches, and system hacking. In this section, I analyze the results, compare the outcomes with emerging literature, and discuss the impact of our additional solutions.

Secure mobility is usually addressed at different levels of the protocol stack, but very few frameworks provide a holistic and cross-layer solution. Earlier works, Mobile IP and Fast Handover for Proxy Mobile IPv6 (FPMIPv6), have made significant progress toward resolving handoff delay and packet loss problems, but they are well-known for their susceptibility to man-in-the-middle, replay, and session hijacking attacks (Alotaibi & Elleithy, 2016). In contrast, our model is built with a lightweight cryptographic handshake together with a trust-aware pre-authentication method that limits leap second vulnerabilities of the model.

In earlier years, Park et al. (2020) and other researchers suggested adaptive authentication frameworks for secure handoff management in 5G environments. Their frameworks, however, rigidly adhered to particular infrastructure and did not adapt to other wireless technologies such as Wi-Fi, LTE, and 5G. Our protocol focuses on cross-network compatibility using a modular architecture. This was particularly striking in our experiments, where we achieved significantly lower handoff latency and packet loss compared to baseline models at varying mobility speeds and with different encryption schemes.

As noted in prior studies, such as Singh & Sharma (2021), one unresolved problem in research concerning handoff is the balance between the level of provided security and the responsiveness of the system. This study focuses on reducing the tradeoff with the implementation of a context aware mobility prediction engine optimizing the user accelerometer, signal strength, and level of trust in the network to adjust action cross user changing checkpoints. This serves to enhance active control in real-time situations, particularly in urban high-density population areas that experience rapid transitions through several access network points.

Looking at security, our model withstands numerous classical attacks that are typically encountered in cross-network transitions. We validated the trust-based key exchange model by simulating several attacks, including key replay and spoofing. Importantly, trust computation—informed by historical behavioral access point scoring—safeguarded the protocol from empowering malicious nodes.

Compared to the rest of the solutions and benchmarks, including Kumar et al. (2022), our framework outperformed the benchmarks in the authentication delay (36.5ms on average), handoff success rate (98.7%), and packet delivery ratio (97.8%). These results are in alignment with the numerous proposals that support intelligent adaptable handoff designs that incorporate security and mobility.

To conclude, the study outlines a method to unify mobility protocols with security features across different networks while maintaining low friction for end users. Incorporating trust and predictive intelligence into the handoff decision process moves away from static threshold-based frameworks and strengthens scalability and flexibility. This approach improves the user experience and, at the same time, fortifies the systems against adapting threats in mobile wireless networks.

# 6 Conclusion and Future Work

This work focuses on studying secure mobility protocols and the complexities of cross network wireless handoffs. Our research indicates that maintaining seamless and secure mobility across different network types is critical for both performance and security in today's mobile world. The models proposed used cryptographic authentication and context-aware decision logic and mitigated the traditional vulnerabilities of inter-network transitions using latency-optimized handoff strategies. The most important outcome of this research is the architecture and assessment of mobility protocols that provides an optimal balance of strong security guarantees and handoff performance metrics, including latency, packet loss, and throughput. Within this framework, the evaluated protocols, including our improved EAP-based handshakes and lightweight cryptographic re-authentication, showed significant cross-technology performance enhancement with wireless Wi-Fi, 5G, and WiMAX. Moreover, adaptive trust management systems reduced risks for impersonation, session hijacking, and downgrade attacks during roaming sessions. Besides the empirical results, this work also adds to the discussion on proactive and context-aware mobility management. Our protocols enable proactive decision-making using location prediction, historical handoff trends, and network density analytics.These are particularly useful for public transportation systems or urban smart infrastructure because they increase user Quality of Service (QoS) and decrease service outages in crowded areas with a lot of movement. While our results confirm that secure cross-network handoffs are both feasible and efficient, this work also lays the groundwork for a variety of future research explorations. One such exploration could be the application of zero-trust network architecture (ZTNA) into mobility protocols, which operates on the principle that no internal or external entity is automatically trusted. Adopting such a paradigm would be a significant step towards reducing risks during inter-network handoff lateral movements. Further research could integrate mobility-powered machine learning anomaly detection, allowing for dynamic user and network condition responsive adaptability. For example, deep reinforcement learning (DRL) agents could optimize real-time handoff strategy decision-making through environmental interactions, lessening the need for static, pre-defined, rule-based systems. Furthermore, the development of secure mobility solutions should prioritize quantum-resilient cryptographic protocols. Current cryptography methods, including RSA and ECC, will be vulnerable to quantum computing; therefore, future mobility solutions need to account for these shifts. Incorporating lattice-based or hash-based cryptography safeguards future mobility protocols from emerging threats. The use of blockchain technology for decentralized trust and authentication systems is another promising area for research. These systems allow for quick verification and credential management across various network domains without a central figure using distributed ledger technologies. From a practical standpoint, our framework could be applied to vehicular networks, or aerial drone communication systems, where high-speed mobility, low-latency communication, and secure transmission are critical. These environments would benefit from seamless and secure transitions between different coverage areas, operators, and technologies. In summary, our work has broadened the secure mobility gap for wireless networks and developed a modular framework for practical application. The integration of mobility, security, and flexibility will be essential for the further development of wireless networks. The future will be able to sustain an increasingly mobile,

interconnected, and systematically vulnerable digital world by adapting advanced cryptography, AI, and decentralized trust systems.

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