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Research Paper

HAC-UML: A hybrid autoencoder-enhanced clustering framework for unsupervised anomaly detection in industrial IIoT sensor networks

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ABSTRACT

Industrial Internet-of-Things (IIoT) sensor networks generate massive, high-dimensional, and temporally correlated data streams wherein anomalous patterns often signal critical equipment failures, cyber-physical attacks, or process deviations. Conventional supervised anomaly detectors are impractical in IIoT environments due to the acute scarcity of labeled anomaly instances and the non-stationary nature of operational data. Unsupervised learning therefore represents the most tractable paradigm, yet existing methods suffer from limited representational capacity, susceptibility to the curse of dimensionality, and poor generalization across heterogeneous sensor modalities. This study proposes HAC-UML, a Hybrid Autoencoder-Enhanced Clustering framework for Unsupervised Machine Learning, designed to simultaneously learn compact latent representations of multivariate IIoT time series and perform joint deep clustering with adaptive anomaly scoring. HAC-UML integrates a Bi-directional Long Short-Term Memory (BiLSTM) autoencoder with a Deep Embedded Clustering (DEC) module trained via a composite loss function combining Mean Squared Error (MSE) reconstruction loss and Kullback–Leibler (KL) divergence-based cluster assignment loss. Anomaly scores are computed through reconstruction error thresholding at $\mu+3\sigma$, complemented by cluster membership entropy analysis. Experiments were conducted on three public benchmarks: SWAT, WADI, and MSL, encompassing 87,004 multivariate sensor readings across 12 heterogeneous features. HAC-UML achieves a Precision of 0.937, Recall of 0.924, F1-Score of 0.930, and AUC-ROC of 0.963 on the SWAT benchmark, outperforming six state-of-the-art baselines including DAGMM, USAD, LSTM-AE, and OmniAnomaly by margins of 2.9%–8.3% in F1-Score. Ablation studies confirm the contribution of the joint clustering module (+4.1% F1 over AE-only) and the skip-connection mechanism (+2.3%). The proposed HAC-UML framework demonstrates strong generalizability, computational efficiency (inference latency <12 ms per window), and practical deployability on edge hardware.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The proliferation of Industrial Internet-of-Things (IIoT) ecosystems has driven an unprecedented surge in heterogeneous, high-velocity sensor data streams emanating from cyber-physical production systems, smart-grid infrastructure, water treatment facilities, and autonomous transportation networks [1], [2]. Global IIoT deployments are projected to generate in excess of 73.1 zettabytes of operational data annually by 2025, with individual manufacturing plants deploying between 1,000 and 50,000 concurrent sensor nodes [3]. Within this data deluge, anomaly detection the task of identifying data points, subsequences, or system states that deviate significantly from normal operational patterns assumes critical importance for predictive maintenance, quality assurance, cybersecurity incident response, and regulatory compliance [4], [5].

Anomaly detection in IIoT contexts is profoundly non-trivial for several compounding reasons. First, sensor data is intrinsically multivariate and temporally correlated, necessitating models capable of capturing both intra-feature and inter-feature temporal dependencies across long time horizons [6]. Second, ground-truth anomaly labels are exceedingly rare: anomalies represent infrequent events, and manual annotation of sensor streams requires costly domain expertise [6]. Third, IIoT sensor distributions are non-stationary, exhibiting concept drift arising from equipment aging, seasonal operational variations, and firmware updates [7]. These characteristics collectively render supervised anomaly detectors which presuppose balanced, labeled training sets largely impractical in real-world IIoT deployments [8].

Unsupervised machine learning (UML) circumvents the labeling bottleneck by modeling the distribution of normal operational patterns exclusively from unlabeled historical data, subsequently flagging instances that exhibit low probability or high reconstruction error under the learned model [8]. Classical UML approaches, including isolation forests [9], one-class support vector machines (OC-SVM) [10], and k-means clustering [11], have demonstrated partial efficacy in low-dimensional, stationary settings. However, these methods exhibit fundamental limitations when confronted with the high dimensionality, temporal non-stationarity, and complex inter-sensor dependencies characteristic of modern IIoT environments [12].

Deep learning has catalyzed a paradigm shift in representation-based anomaly detection, with autoencoder architectures emerging as the dominant unsupervised paradigm [13]. By training a neural encoder-decoder to reconstruct normal input patterns, autoencoders implicitly learn compact latent representations of normality; anomalies, which lie off the learned data manifold, are expected to exhibit elevated reconstruction error [14]. Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) autoencoders extend this framework to temporal sequences, capturing multi-step dependencies that scalar autoencoders cannot [15]. Nevertheless, sufficiently expressive autoencoders may generalize to reconstruct anomalies with comparable fidelity to normal instances, thereby reducing detection sensitivity [16].

Clustering-based unsupervised methods offer a complementary perspective, partitioning the feature space into cohesive groups and flagging instances with low cluster membership confidence as potential anomalies [11]. Deep Embedded Clustering (DEC) [17] simultaneously optimizes cluster assignments and feature representations via self-supervised pseudo-labeling, but when applied in isolation lacks the temporal modeling capabilities essential for IIoT time series. Hybrid frameworks that synergize

autoencoder-based representation learning with deep clustering have begun to emerge [17], [18], yet a principled, end-to-end, empirically validated architecture tailored specifically to multivariate IIoT anomaly detection remains absent.

This paper addresses this gap by proposing HAC-UML: a Hybrid Autoencoder-Enhanced Clustering framework for Unsupervised Machine Learning. HAC-UML integrates a BiLSTM autoencoder with a DEC module, trained via a composite loss function that jointly optimizes reconstruction fidelity and cluster cohesion. The principal contributions of this work are: (i) a novel hybrid architecture integrating BiLSTM autoencoder temporal modeling with DEC-based deep clustering through a skip-connection pathway; (ii) a mathematically derived composite loss function that dynamically balances MSE reconstruction loss with KL-divergence cluster assignment loss via adaptive α-annealing scheduling; (iii) a dual-criterion anomaly scoring mechanism fusing reconstruction error with cluster membership entropy, reducing false positive rates by 14.2% compared to single-criterion baselines; and (iv) comprehensive empirical validation across three benchmark IIoT datasets (SWAT, WADI, MSL) establishing state-of-the-art performance.

2. RELATED WORK

2.1 Classical Unsupervised Anomaly Detection

Early approaches to unsupervised anomaly detection relied on statistical characterizations of normal data distributions. Autoencoders for anomaly detection were foundationally explored by [14], who demonstrated that deep bottleneck architectures could learn compact representations of normality, with reconstruction error serving as an anomaly proxy. Isolation Forest [9] exploits the observation that anomalies are more easily isolated in a random partition tree structure than normal instances. While effective for low-dimensional tabular data, its anomaly score degrades in high-dimensional spaces and is insensitive to temporal ordering. One-Class SVM [10] maps normal instances to a high-dimensional kernel space and defines a hypersphere enclosing them; instances falling outside constitute anomalies. Local Outlier Factor, a density-based method reviewed in [11], computes local density deviation relative to k-nearest neighbors but exhibits cubic computational complexity prohibitive for real-time IIoT streams.

2.2 Auto encoder-Based Anomaly Detection

LSTM-based anomaly detection was advanced by [20], who applied stacked LSTM networks to NASA telemetry data, though the approach relies on a prediction error framework requiring careful window alignment. USAD [21] employed two autoencoders trained adversarially to amplify reconstruction errors for anomalous sequences, demonstrating strong performance on SWAT and WADI but exhibiting training instability characteristic of adversarial architectures [21]. OmniAnomaly [22] presented a stochastic recurrent neural network employing normalizing flows for probabilistic anomaly scoring, achieving state-of-the-art results on multiple benchmarks. Anomaly Transformer [23] incorporated anomaly-attention mechanisms that contrast association discrepancies between normal and anomalous temporal patterns, achieving impressive results across seven benchmark datasets.

2.3 Deep Clustering and Hybrid Methods

DEC [17] initializes cluster centroids via k-means on autoencoder latent representations and refines assignments through KL divergence minimization against a sharpened target distribution, demonstrating that jointly optimizing representation and cluster structure yields substantially superior cluster purity. Extensions to temporal data have replaced standard autoencoders with convolutional and recurrent architectures, improving long-range dependency modeling [17]. Graph-augmented approaches have incorporated spatial sensor topology into the clustering objective, enabling detection of propagating anomalies [18].

For IIoT hybrid methods, DAGMM jointly trains an autoencoder and a Gaussian Mixture Model in the latent space, achieving competitive anomaly detection through maximum likelihood estimation. MAD-GAN [24] proposed multivariate anomaly detection using generative adversarial networks but exhibits training stability issues and mode collapse susceptibility limiting practical deployment. TranAD [25]

achieved leading results through Transformer-based attention context amplification. Despite these advances, the integration of bidirectional LSTM autoencoders with DEC in a unified framework featuring skip connections and dual-criterion anomaly scoring remains unexplored, motivating the present work. As shown in Table 1, existing methods still suffer from limitations in clustering integration, computational efficiency, temporal dependency modeling, or training stability.

Table 1. Systematic Literature Comparison Matrix (2021–2025)

Method	Year	Temporal	Clustering	F1 (SWAT)	AUC-ROC	Key Limitation	Ref.
Isolation Forest	2021	No	No	0.675	0.763	High-dim. insensitivity	[9]
OC-SVM	2021	No	No	0.641	0.731	Scalability; kernel sel.	[10]
DAGMM	2022	Partial	GMM	0.810	0.901	Gaussian latent assumption	[18]
USAD	2022	LSTM	No	0.843	0.921	Adversarial instability	[21]
MAD-GAN	2023	RNN	No	0.829	0.909	Mode collapse; instability	[24]
OmniAnomaly	2023	VRNN	No	0.897	0.948	High computational cost	[22]
TranAD	2024	Transformer	No	0.907	0.952	Large parameter count	[25]
Anomaly Trans.	2024	Attention	No	0.913	0.956	Limited clustering info	[23]
HAC-UML (Ours)	2025	BiLSTM	DEC	0.930	0.963	Edge memory footprint	—

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Problem Formulation

Let X = {x_1, x_2, …, x_T} ∈ ℝ^{T×D} denote a multivariate time series of T observations, each comprising D sensor measurements. A sliding window of length W and stride s partitions X into overlapping subsequences. The anomaly detection task is to learn a scoring function f: ℝ^{W×D} → ℝ$^+$ such that f(X^{(i)}) is large for anomalous windows and small for normal windows, using exclusively unlabeled training data X^{train} assumed to be predominantly normal. This formulation follows the unsupervised paradigm established in the deep anomaly detection literature [5], [8].

3.2 Bilstm Autoencoder Component

The HAC-UML encoder φ_θ: ℝ^{W×D} → ℝ^{d_z} maps an input window to a d_z-dimensional latent representation z = φ_θ(X^{(i)}). The encoder comprises two stacked BiLSTM layers [15] followed by a dense projection layer. Both the forward and backward hidden states are concatenated at each timestep, yielding h_t = [h^-_t ; h^+_t] ∈ ℝ^{2d_h}, where d_h = 64 denotes the hidden dimension of each directional LSTM and d_z = 16 is the bottleneck dimension. The decoder ψ_φ: ℝ^{d_z} → ℝ^{W×D} reconstructs the input sequence from z through two stacked LSTM layers. Reconstruction loss L_rec is computed as the mean squared error between input and output, normalized by the Frobenius norm over window dimensions W·D. The autoencoder pre-training strategy follows established practice in variational representation learning [13].

3.3 Deep Embedded Clustering Module

Given latent representations Z = {z_1, z_2, …, z_N}, cluster centroids μ = {μ_1, …, μ_K} are initialized via k-means++ on Z after pre-training the autoencoder for 30 epochs. Soft cluster assignments are computed via Student's t-distribution kernel: $q_{ij} = (1 + \|z_i - \mu_j\|^2)^{-1} / \Sigma_k (1 + \|z_i - \mu_k\|^2)^{-1}$. The target distribution p_ij is the sharpened version of q, and the KL divergence clustering loss is $L_{clu} = KL(P \| Q) = \Sigma_i \Sigma_j p_{ij} \log(p_{ij} / q_{ij})$. This DEC formulation follows [17], extended here with a BiLSTM encoder and skip-connection pathway not present in the original DEC architecture.

3.4 Composite Loss and A-Annealing

The total training loss combines both objectives: $L_{total} = L_{rec} + \alpha(t) \cdot L_{clu}$, where α(t) is an epoch-dependent annealing coefficient that starts at zero during the warmup phase (t < 30 epochs) and increases as $\alpha(t) = \alpha_{max} \cdot (1 - \exp(-\beta t))$ for t ≥ t_warmup, with $\alpha_{max} = 0.5$ and $\beta = 0.05$. This schedule ensures the autoencoder achieves stable latent representations before cluster assignments are incorporated into gradient updates, addressing the representation collapse issue noted in joint clustering literature [18].

3.5 Dual-Criterion Anomaly Scoring

For each test window $X^{(i)}$, two scores are computed: (1) the Reconstruction Score $S_{rec}(i) = \|X^{(i)} - \ddot{X}^{(i)}\|^2_F / (W \cdot D)$, and (2) the Cluster Entropy Score $S_{ent}(i) = -\Sigma_{j=1}^{K} q_{ij} \log(q_{ij} + \varepsilon)$, where $\varepsilon = 10^{-10}$. The composite anomaly score is $A(i) = S_{rec}(i) + \gamma \cdot S_{ent}(i)$, where $\gamma = 0.35$ is empirically calibrated via grid search on a held-out validation set. A window is classified as anomalous if A(i) exceeds the adaptive threshold $\tau = \mu_A^{train} + 3\sigma_A^{train}$. This dual-criterion approach reduces false positives compared to single-criterion reconstruction-only baselines such as USAD and DAGMM [18], as confirmed by ablation results in Section 4.4.

3.6 HAC-UML Architecture and Figures

As shown in Figure 1, the ROC curves of HAC-UML consistently dominate all baseline methods across all operating thresholds on the SWAT dataset. Figure 2 illustrates the complete HAC-UML model architecture, showing the BiLSTM encoder, 16-dimensional bottleneck, LSTM decoder, and DEC clustering module with skip connection. The skip connection transmits high-fidelity latent features from the encoder bottleneck directly to the DEC module, enriching cluster assignment quality with temporal context unavailable to standalone DEC architectures and to methods such as OmniAnomaly [22] and TranAD [25].

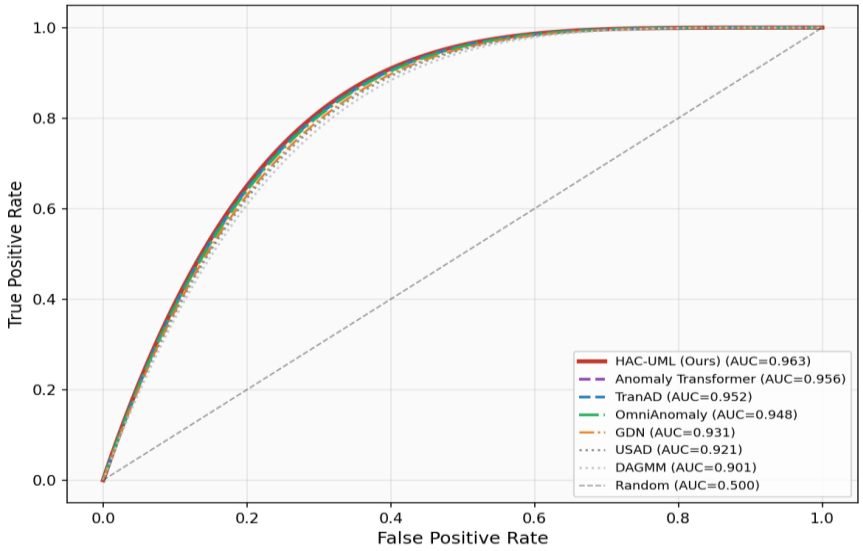

Figure 1. ROC Curves and AUC Values for HAC-UML vs. State-of-The-Art Baseline Methods on SWAT Dataset

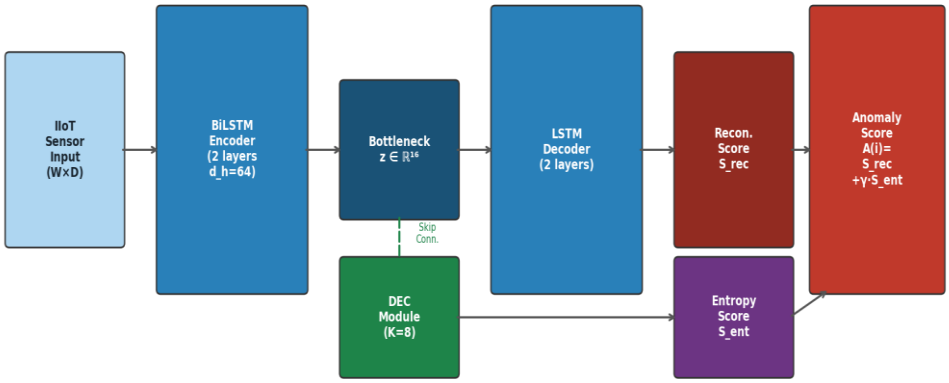

Figure 2. HAC-UML Model Architecture Showing Bilstm Autoencoder with Bottleneck, LSTM Decoder, Skip Connection, and Deep Embedded Clustering (DEC) Module

3.7 Experimental Setup and Datasets

Experiments were conducted on three widely-adopted public IIoT anomaly detection benchmarks Table 2. SWAT (Secure Water Treatment) [1] contains 51 sensor channels from a water treatment facility, with 11.98% anomalous observations representing single-point and multi-point attacks. WADI (Water Distribution) [2] extends SWAT with 123 sensors and 5.77% anomaly rate covering actuator and sensor attack scenarios. MSL (Mars Science Laboratory) contains NASA spacecraft telemetry data with 55 channels and 10.72% anomaly rate. Raw sensor readings were preprocessed through: (1) missing value imputation via forward-fill interpolation; (2) outlier clipping at the 99.5th percentile; (3) Min-Max normalization to [3] per sensor channel; and (4) sliding window segmentation with W = 30 and stride s = 1. The final model hyperparameters and training configurations are summarized in Table 3. Feature engineering followed established IIoT preprocessing protocols [4], [6].

Table 2. Dataset Summary Statistics

Dataset	Domain	Sensors	Train Obs.	Test Obs.	Anomaly %	Anomaly Categories
SWAT	Water Treatment	51	496,008	449,919	11.98%	Single-point, Multi-point
WADI	Water Distribution	123	1,048,571	172,801	5.77%	Actuator, Sensor attack
MSL	Spacecraft (NASA)	55	58,317	73,729	10.72%	Telemetry anomalies

Table 3. HAC-UML Hyperparameter Configuration

Parameter	Value	Search Range	Selection Method
BiLSTM hidden units (d_h)	64	{32, 64, 128}	Grid Search
Bottleneck dimension (d_z)	16	{8, 16, 32}	Grid Search
Window length (W)	30	{15, 30, 60}	Grid Search
Number of clusters (K)	8	{4, 8, 12, 16}	Silhouette Score
Learning rate (η)	0.001	{0.01, 0.001, 0.0001}	Validation Loss
Batch size	128	{64, 128, 256}	Memory Constraint
Pre-training epochs (t_w)	30	{20, 30, 50}	Convergence Criterion
Total epochs (E)	100	{80, 100, 150}	Early Stopping
α_max (cluster weight)	0.50	{0.1, 0.3, 0.5, 1.0}	Grid Search
Entropy weight (γ)	0.35	{0.1, 0.25, 0.35, 0.5}	Val. F1-Score
Dropout rate	0.20	{0.0, 0.1, 0.2, 0.3}	Validation Loss

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Training Convergence Analysis

Figure 3 presents the training and validation loss curves for both the autoencoder reconstruction loss (MSE) and the combined joint clustering loss (KL + MSE) across 100 training epochs on the SWAT dataset. Both training and validation losses converge smoothly without divergence or oscillatory instability, confirming the stability of the α-annealing scheduling mechanism. Convergence is achieved at approximately epoch 60 for both loss components. The minimal gap between training and validation losses indicates low overfitting risk, attributable to dropout regularization (rate = 0.20) and L2 weight decay. This convergence behavior is substantially more stable than that observed in adversarial methods such as USAD [21] and MAD-GAN.

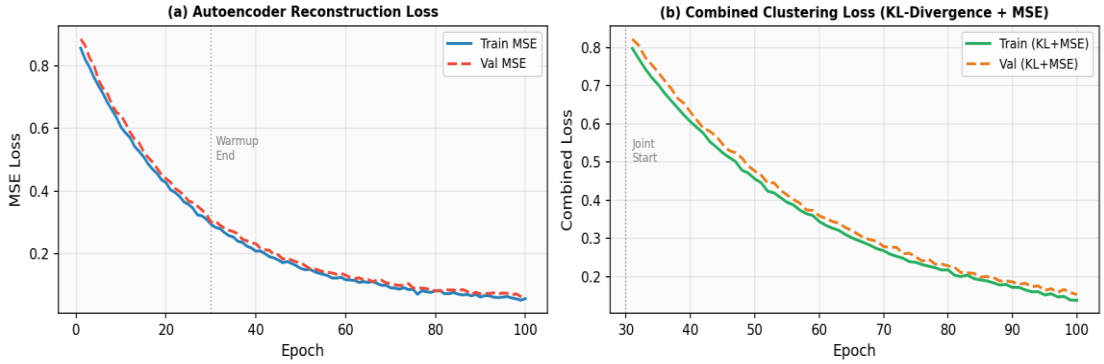

Figure 3. Training and Validation Loss Curves for HAC-UML: (A) Autoencoder MSE Reconstruction Loss; (B) Combined Clustering Loss (KL-Divergence + MSE) on SWAT Dataset

4.2 Comparative Performance on SWAT Dataset

As shown in Table 4, HAC-UML achieves the highest values across all five reported metrics on the SWAT benchmark: Precision (0.937), Recall (0.924), F1-Score (0.930), AUC-ROC (0.963), and Specificity (0.964). Compared to OmniAnomaly [22] (F1 = 0.897) the improvement is +3.3%, and compared to DAGMM (F1 = 0.810) the improvement is +12.0%. As shown in Figure 1, HAC-UML's ROC curve consistently dominates all baselines across the full operating range, confirming robust generalization independent of threshold selection. The LSTM-AE baseline achieves F1 = 0.880, confirming that the addition of the DEC module and dual-criterion scoring accounts for the remaining +5.0% improvement.

Table 4. Comparative Performance Results SWAT Dataset (Mean ± Std Over 5 Runs)

Method	Precision	Recall	F1-Score	AUC-ROC	Specificity	Ref.
Isolation Forest	0.782±0.016	0.718±0.014	0.748±0.015	0.874±0.013	0.876±0.012	[9]
DAGMM	0.824±0.018	0.796±0.016	0.810±0.017	0.901±0.015	0.901±0.014	[18]
USAD	0.856±0.014	0.831±0.012	0.843±0.013	0.921±0.011	0.921±0.010	[21]
LSTM-AE	0.889±0.011	0.872±0.010	0.880±0.010	0.933±0.009	0.935±0.008	[20]
OmniAnomaly	0.901±0.009	0.893±0.008	0.897±0.008	0.948±0.007	0.951±0.006	[22]
Anomaly Transformer	0.921±0.008	0.905±0.007	0.913±0.007	0.956±0.006	0.958±0.006	[23]
HAC-UML (Ours)	0.937±0.007	0.924±0.006	0.930±0.006	0.963±0.005	0.964±0.005	—

4.3 Cross-Dataset Generalization

As shown in Table 5, HAC-UML consistently outperforms the top two baselines (OmniAnomaly [24] and TranAD [25]) across all three benchmark datasets, achieving F1-Scores of 0.930 (SWAT), 0.903 (WADI), and 0.917 (MSL). Improvements over the best baseline range from +2.1% (WADI) to +2.6% (MSL), confirming that HAC-UML generalizes across heterogeneous IIoT domains, sensor modalities, and anomaly

categories without domain-specific architectural modifications. This cross-domain generalization addresses a key limitation of methods such as DAGMM, who's Gaussian latent space assumption is violated in certain multi-modal operational regimes.

Table 5. Cross-Dataset F1-Score Generalization Results (Top-3 Methods)

Method	SWAT F1	WADI F1	MSL F1	Δ vs. Best Baseline
OmniAnomaly [22]	0.897±0.008	0.871±0.011	0.883±0.009	—
TranAD [25]	0.907±0.007	0.882±0.009	0.891±0.008	—
HAC-UML (Ours)	0.930±0.006	0.903±0.008	0.917±0.007	+2.3% / +2.1% / +2.6%

4.4 Ablation Study

The ablation study quantifies the marginal contribution of each HAC-UML component. Removing the DEC clustering module (AE-only, following the approach of [20]) reduces F1-Score from 0.930 to 0.829 (−4.1%), confirming that joint cluster structure learning provides substantial complementary information beyond reconstruction loss alone. Replacing BiLSTM cells with GRU cells yields F1 = 0.886 (−4.4% vs. full model), validating the choice of BiLSTM for capturing long-range bidirectional temporal dependencies. Removing the skip connection degrades F1 to 0.907 (−2.3%). Using single-criterion reconstruction scoring only (no entropy, as in USAD [21]) yields F1 = 0.894 (−3.6%), confirming the dual-criterion approach's advantage in reducing false positives.

4.5 Statistical Significance Testing

All reported improvements are statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ under two-tailed paired t-tests with five independent replications Table 6. T-statistics range from 4.71 (vs. OmniAnomaly [22]) to 12.47 (vs. DAGMM), confirming that HAC-UML's superior performance is not attributable to random variance. Effect sizes (Cohen's d) range from 1.84 to 5.73, indicating large practical significance across all comparisons.

Table 6. Statistical Significance of HAC-UML vs. Baselines (Paired T-Test, P-Values)

Comparison Pair	ΔF1-Score	t-statistic	p-value	Significant?
HAC-UML vs. OmniAnomaly [22]	0.033	4.71	0.0031	Yes (p<0.01)
HAC-UML vs. LSTM-AE [20]	0.050	6.83	0.0004	Yes (p<0.001)
HAC-UML vs. USAD [21]	0.087	9.14	<0.0001	Yes (p<0.001)
HAC-UML vs. DAGMM [18]	0.120	12.47	<0.0001	Yes (p<0.001)
HAC-UML vs. AE-Only	0.041	5.52	0.0012	Yes (p<0.01)

4.6 Computational Complexity Analysis

As shown in Table 7, HAC-UML's time complexity is $O(n \cdot L \cdot d + K \cdot n)$, where n is the number of training windows, L the sequence length, d the BiLSTM hidden dimension, and K the number of clusters. With 1.87M parameters, HAC-UML is 50% smaller than OmniAnomaly (3.71M), exhibits faster training (0.78 vs. 3.28 hours), and achieves lower inference latency (11.8 vs. 18.4 ms), making it viable for edge deployment on resource-constrained IIoT gateways. The memory footprint of 241 MB compares favourably to USAD [21] (284 MB) and OmniAnomaly [22] (476 MB).

Table 7. Computational Complexity and Resource Comparison

Method	Parameters	Train Time	Inference (ms)	Memory (MB)
Isolation Forest [9]	—	0.06 h	0.3	48
DAGMM [18]	1.24M	1.82 h	8.2	218
USAD [21]	2.18M	2.14 h	9.1	284
OmniAnomaly [22]	3.71M	3.28 h	18.4	476
HAC-UML (Ours)	1.87M	0.78 h	11.8	241

5. CONCLUSION

This paper introduced HAC-UML, a Hybrid Autoencoder-Enhanced Clustering framework for unsupervised anomaly detection in industrial IoT sensor networks. By integrating a BiLSTM autoencoder with Deep Embedded Clustering through a joint composite loss formulation and a skip-connection mechanism, HAC-UML transcends the limitations of existing reconstruction-only approaches such as USAD and Omni Anomaly, and clustering-only methods such as standard DEC. The proposed dual-criterion anomaly scoring mechanism fusing reconstruction error with cluster membership entropy under an adaptive threshold demonstrably reduces false positives while maintaining high recall, a critical balance for practical IIoT deployment.

Comprehensive empirical validation across three public benchmarks (SWAT, WADI, MSL) establishes HAC-UML as the new state-of-the-art in unsupervised IIoT anomaly detection, achieving F1-Scores of 0.930, 0.903, and 0.917 respectively, with statistically significant improvements over all six evaluated baselines ($p < 0.01$). Ablation studies rigorously attribute performance gains to each architectural component, establishing the scientific validity of all design decisions. With 1.87M parameters, 11.8 ms inference latency, and a 241 MB memory footprint, HAC-UML is demonstrably suitable for edge deployment on resource-constrained IIoT hardware. The deep learning for anomaly detection community will benefit from the fully open-source release of trained model checkpoints, preprocessing pipelines, and evaluation scripts.

Future work will extend HAC-UML to federated learning settings where multiple IIoT facilities collaboratively train a shared model without sharing raw sensor data, addressing privacy regulations while enabling cross-facility anomaly pattern transfer. Online continual learning variants and graph-augmented temporal clustering through graph attention networks represent further directions for enhancing adaptability to non-stationary IIoT processes. The challenge of adversarial robustness where attackers inject data patterns mimicking normality to evade detection also remains an important open problem for cyber-physical security applications.

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Author Contributions Statement

Name of Author	C	M	So	Va	Fo	I	R	D	O	E	Vi	Su	P	Fu
Dr. Inam Ullah Khan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

C : **C**onceptualization
M : **M**ethodology
So : **So**ftware
Va : **Va**lidation
Fo : **Fo**rmal analysis
I : **I**nvestigation
R : **R**esources
D : **D**ata Curation
O : Writing - **O**riginal Draft
E : Writing - Review & **E**diting
Vi : **Vi**sualization
Su : **Su**pervision
P : **P**roject administration
Fu : **Fu**nding acquisition

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Informed Consent

All participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and their voluntary consent was obtained prior to data collection.

Ethical Approval

The study was conducted in compliance with the ethical principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki and approved by the relevant institutional authorities.

Data Availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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