



Detecting Different Types of Distributed Denial of Service Attacks

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Abstract

Distributed Denial of Service Attacks (DDoS) threaten every device connected to the Internet. The fast progress and wide spreading DDoS attacks are among the most well-known features of them. Many studies have been conducted to reduce the impact of these fast-progressing and widespread attacks. However, due to the continuous development of attack types and the implementation of different techniques, the prevention of attacks has not been fully achieved. Therefore, within the scope of this study, a DDoS attack was examined first and applications used to detect it were investigated. A system has been proposed to detect DDoS attacks using data mining methods. For the proposed system, experiment mechanisms for Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) Flooding, Spoofing Internet Protocol (IP), SYN Flood with Spoofed IP, and User Datagram Protocol (UDP) Flooding, which are among the DDoS attack types, were established and the attacks were performed to obtain network flow data. The classification was made with appropriate data mining methods according to the specified features and ZeroR, OneR, Naive Bayes, Bayes Net, Decision Stump, and J48 algorithms were used. According to these algorithms, the best classification rate has been reached with J48 algorithm. The results have shown that the proposed system plays an important role in determining the DDoS attack type. The proposed system will ensure that appropriate detection mechanisms are applied more quickly, effectively and efficiently in real attacks.

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Öz

Dağıtık Hizmet Dışı Bırakma Saldırıları (DDoS: Distributed Denial of Service Attacks) internete bağlı her bir cihazı tehdit etmektedir. DDoS saldırılarının hızlı ilerlemesi ve geniş alana yayılması en bilinen özelliklerindedir. Hızlı ilerleyen ve geniş alana yayılan bu saldırıların etkisini azaltmak için birçok çalışma yapılmıştır. Ancak saldırı türlerinin sürekli gelişmesi ve farklı tekniklerin uygulanması nedeni ile saldırıların engellenmesi tam olarak gerçekleştirilememiştir. Bu nedenle çalışma kapsamında öncelikle DDoS saldırısı incelenmiş ve tespit etmeye yönelik uygulamalar araştırılmıştır. Veri madenciliği yöntemleri kullanılarak DDoS saldırılarını tespit etmek için bir sistem önerilmiştir. Önerilen sistem için DDoS saldırı türlerinden Aktarım Denetimi Protokolü Saldırısı (TCP: Transmission Control Protocol Flooding), IP Sahteciliği Saldırısı (Spoofing IP: Internet Protocol), Maskelenen IP ile SYN Saldırısı (SYN Flood with Spoofed IP) ve Kullanıcı Veri Bloğu İletişim Kuralları Saldırısı (UDP: User Datagram Protocol Flooding) için deney düzenekleri kurulmuş ve saldırılar gerçekleştirilerek ağ akış verileri elde edilmiştir. Belirlenen özneliklere göre uygun veri madenciliği yöntemleri ile sınıflandırma yapılmış ve ZeroR, OneR, Naive Bayes, Bayes Net, Decision Stump ve J48 algoritmaları kullanılmıştır. Bu algoritmalara göre en iyi sınıflandırma oranına J48 algoritması ile ulaşılmıştır. Elde edilen sonuçlar, önerilen sistemin DDoS saldırı türü belirlenmesinde önemli rol oynadığını göstermiştir. Önerilen sistem, gerçek saldırılarda uygun tespit mekanizmalarının daha hızlı, etkin ve verimli şekilde uygulanmasını sağlayacaktır.

1. INTRODUCTION

Every day there are new and rapid developments in the field of cyber security. This innovation in the cyber world makes it increasingly difficult to maintain security in the same world. Attack types in the cyber world are also affected by these developments and become more diversified. It is becoming increasingly difficult to detect evolving and diverse types of attacks with the traditional methods. Instead of single types of attacks, advanced types of attacks with very different characteristics are realized. Defense methods applied to different types of attacks should also be different and applicable. Therefore, detection and prevention systems with different or new features from traditional methods should be developed against cyber attacks.

DDoS (Distributed Denial of Service Attacks) come first in cyber attacks [1]. The main purpose of DDoS attacks is to disable accessibility, which is one of the information security features. DDoS attacks aim to make the resources of a target or target systems unavailable. These resources (processor, memory, disk space, etc.) are usually resources that will prevent the system from serving. Damaging these resources or preventing them from working will cause major disruptions in the continuity of the service provided. Each DDoS attack can occur in different types [2,3]. Generally, while the packets sent to the target system are being processed, system resources and bandwidth are consumed excessively and a DDoS attack occurs. As a result of these attacks, the target system becomes unresponsive to incoming requests and packets and becomes out of service [4,5].

DDoS attack types have different features and characteristics from each other. Attacks such as Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) Flooding, Spoofing IP (Internet Protocol), SYN Flood with Spoofed IP, User Datagram Protocol (UDP) Flooding, Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP) Flooding, Hyper-Text Transfer Protocol (HTTP), Get/Post, and Ping of Death are types of DDoS attacks [6-11]. In this study, four different types of DDoS attacks encountered most in the literature were examined and discussed experimentally. These attack types are TCP Flooding, Spoofing IP, SYN Flood with Spoofed IP, and UDP Flooding.

The main purpose of the TCP Flooding is to fill the memory by sending a large number of packets to the content from the open ports of the target system and to put the system out of service [12]. Spoofing IP Attack is the unauthorized use of an IP address during an attack. The main purpose of this attack is to hide the identities of attacker systems and to make it difficult to be discovered [13]. In SYN Flood with Spoofed IP, SYN packets are sent to the target system by being masked by an IP address and the system memory is filled. The system sending the packets is in unidentified status and the target system becomes inoperable due to over-sent packets [12]. The main purpose of UDP Flooding is to randomly select the ports of the target system and send a large amount of UDP packets to the system [14]. Each of these mentioned attack types has different characteristics from the other. Therefore, within the scope of the study, sample experiments and different analyzes were made for the mentioned attack types.

When the related studies are examined, it is seen that the detection and prevention studies of traditional attacks are insufficient in detecting DDoS attacks [15]. The unknown source of the attack, large number of the attack sources, attacks having more than one part, the network flow generated at the time of the attack is similar to the normal network flow, and the failure of certain rules used before can be shown as the reasons of this situation [16]. In their study on early detection of DDoS attacks, Yuan and Mills monitored the network-wide effects of the attacks. They used cross-correlation analysis to create traffic patterns. These patterns are used to indicate where and when a DDoS attack may occur [17]. Shiaeles et al. proposed a system using a fuzzy prediction method against real-time DDoS attacks. If the packet arrival time which they observe is lower than the average packet arrival time, then the event is seen as a DDoS attack. Besides, network-based DDoS attacks were investigated in their study [18]. In a different study, Karimzad and Faraahi proposed an anomaly-based detection method based on the characteristics of attack packets. By activating the Radial Basis Function neural network with vectors based on seven attributes, they classified the traffic as normal or a DDoS attack. The data set of the University of California at Los Angeles was used for this process. The proposed method can classify the system as normal or attack, but cannot define and classify the types of attacks [19]. In the study of Al-Duwairi, correlation analysis between the outgoing and incoming traffic of a network was made and the occurring

changes were used to detect DDoS attacks. DARPA dataset is used for this and Fuzzy classification methods have been preferred to ensure their accuracy [20].

When the studies in the literature are examined, it has been seen that many studies in which TCP/IP packet header is analyzed according to well-defined rules and conditions have been conducted [17,21], and packet features showing DDoS attack in network traffic [19,20,22] have been performed. However, these studies made a limited progress and the desired level of attack detection could not be achieved. One of the biggest reasons for this situation is that each attack has its characteristics. For this reason, DDoS attacks were primarily examined within the scope of the study. As a result of the investigations, information was provided to understand DDoS attacks and to increase awareness. Besides, a system using data mining methods to detect DDoS attacks has been proposed. For the proposed system, firstly, experimental mechanisms for TCP Flooding, Spoofing IP, SYN Flood with Spoofed IP, and UDP Flooding, which are among DDoS attack types, have been established. Network flow data were obtained through these experimental setups. The Source Port, Source IP, Destination IP, Destination Port, Protocol, Size, Number, Delay Time, and DDoS Type features are specified to be used in data mining. The classification was made with data mining methods suitable for these features and algorithms such as ZeroR, OneR, Naive Bayes, Bayes Net, Decision Stump and J48. The results obtained showed that the proposed system plays an important role in determining the type of attack when there is a DDoS attack.

The study consists of six parts. In the first part, basic information and a review of literature are given. Information about the systems used and the steps for to perform DDoS attacks are given in the second part. In the third part, studies on listening to attacks and obtaining data set are presented in detail. The development of the proposed system with data mining methods is given in the fourth part, and the results of the classification algorithm, which is suitable for the developed system and has the highest success rate, are given in the fifth part. In the last part, a general evaluation of the study has been done and information about the future planned studies is presented.

2. PERFORMING DDOS ATTACKS

DDoS attack mechanisms were prepared to be used in the experiments performed in this study. With the prepared DDoS attack mechanisms, the target system, which is previously determined, was reached and the attack operations were performed. The target system has been reached, system resources have been used excessively, and the performance level of the system has been minimized. Thus, the system has become inoperable. The steps determined for the attack carried out in this study are given in Figure 1.

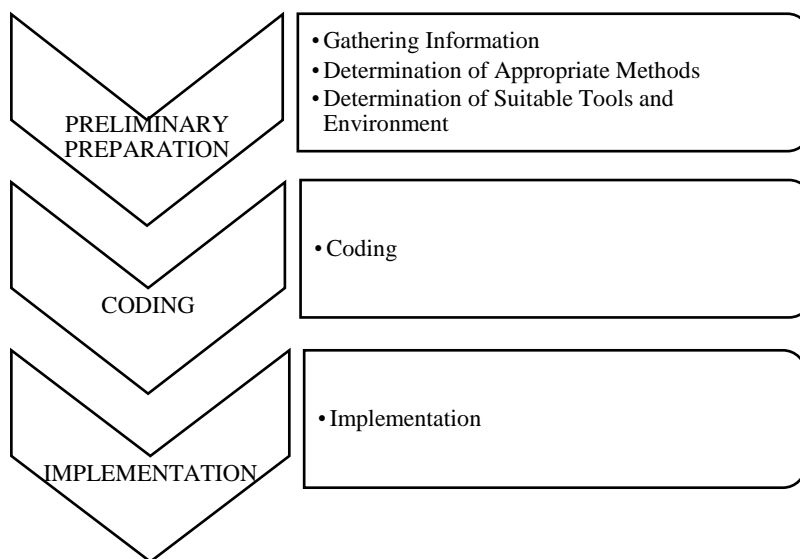


Figure 1. Steps to perform DDoS attacks

The steps taken for DDoS attacks are preliminary preparation, coding, and implementation, respectively (Figure 1). Preliminary preparation is an important step in the realization of DDoS attacks. The operations performed for preliminary preparation consist of three steps. The first of these steps is information gathering. At this step, target information (IP information, system information, function information, etc.) is obtained. In determining the appropriate methods, which is the second step of the preliminary phase, the types of attacks to be applied to the target system are determined. After gathering information about the target system and determining the appropriate attack type, the tools and environment suitable for the attack were determined. VirtualBox virtualization environment was chosen for the attack environment and the necessary experimental mechanisms for the attack were built on this environment. An environment with a Windows operating system as the target system and a Kali Linux operating system as an attacker was used. Screenshots of these systems are shown in Figure 2.

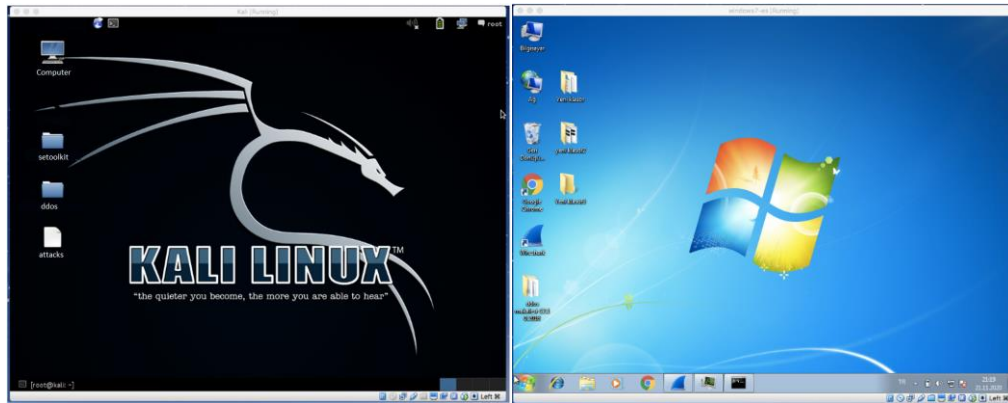


Figure 2. Views of the attacker and target systems

In the coding step, the necessary coding for the attack has been done. Experiments were prepared in two different ways for each of the four attacks using the hping3 tool in the attacker system. It is intended to damage the functioning of the target system. Attacking the target system was performed during the implementation phase. For this, four different DDoS attack types commonly seen in the literature were selected [6-11]. After the necessary steps were taken, the functioning of the target system was damaged. The visual about this is given in Figure 3.

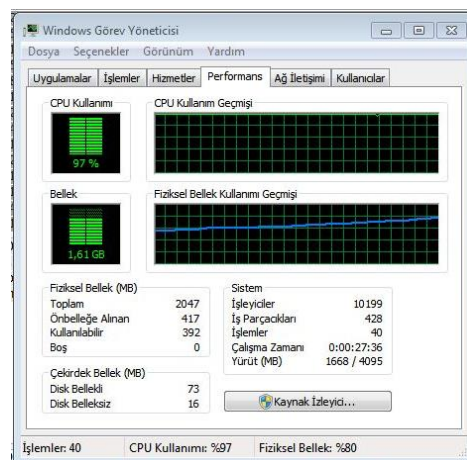


Figure 3. The operating status of the target system at the time of the attack

When the attacks were made, the resource usage and operating performance of the target system were significantly affected (Figure 3). The CPU utilization rate of the target system has reached 97% and the physical memory utilization rate has exceeded 80%. The operating condition of the system is affected and has been minimized.

3. DATA OBTAINING

After the performance analysis of the target system could be tracked live when the attack was made, the data collection step was started. Wireshark packet analysis tool was used to listen to the target system network for each attack and to collect the obtained network flow data. Wireshark is a useful tool that enables network traffic to be monitored, analyzed, and filtered on-demand, where necessary, via a graphical interface [23]. An example of monitoring attacks with Wireshark is given in Figure 4.

Source Port	Source IP	Destination IP	Destination Port	Protocol	Size	Number	Delay Time	DDoS Type
31270	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41494	2.935291000	
31271	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41495	2.935290000	
31272	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41496	2.935353000	
31273	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41497	2.935353000	
31274	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41498	2.935353000	
31275	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41499	2.935352000	
31276	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41500	2.935353000	
31277	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41501	2.935353000	
31278	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41502	2.935352000	
31279	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41503	2.935353000	
31280	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41504	2.935353000	
31281	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41505	2.935353000	
31282	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41506	2.935227000	
31283	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41507	2.935326000	
31284	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41508	2.935392000	
31285	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41509	2.935392000	
31286	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41510	2.935392000	
31287	192.168.1.35	192.168.1.34	0	TCP	60	41511	2.935392000	

Figure 4. Tracking attacks with Wireshark

Detecting network traffic completely in a short time is of great importance for attack detection [24]. The data set KDDCUP99 was examined and 9 features found suitable for this study were determined [25-27]. Descriptions and explanations of these features belonging to the data set obtained by Wireshark are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Network flow data features

No	Feature	Explanation
1	Source Port	It contains the port information used by the computer sending the packet.
2	Source IP	The IP address of the computer sending the packet.
3	Destination IP	The IP address of the computer receiving the package.
4	Destination Port	It contains the port information of the computer receiving the packet.
5	Protocol	It shows which protocol the packet belongs to.
6	Size	The size of the packet sent/received. The data size type used in this study was determined as Byte.
7	Number	The number of all packets sent/received.
8	Delay Time	It is the time difference between the previous pack and the next pack. This difference is handled in seconds (sec).
9	DDoS Type	It shows the type of DDoS attack implemented.

For the detection of the attack using the attributes specified in Table 1, a network-based system according to its location, anomaly-based according to the identification method, and non-real-time according to the data processing time has been proposed.

4. SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Data mining is one of the methods used to transform large amounts of data collected very quickly, into meaningful information as a result of various analyzes [24]. In this study, data mining was used to detect attacks. When using data mining methods, the Weka tool is used for data processing and statistical evaluation of learning methods on data [27]. In the proposed system, the Weka tool was used to perform these operations and to apply data methods such as visual monitoring of the model extracted from the raw data.

When the literature is examined, it is seen that different classification algorithms are prominent in data mining for attack detection and some of them are frequently used [28-30]. ZeroR, OneR, Naive Bayes, Bayes Net, Decision Stump, and J48 algorithms were used in this study. ZeroR algorithm is an algorithm that estimates the mean value of numerical test data and applies the basic algorithm rules [24]. OneR algorithm is one of the algorithms that tests property and generates a list of rules.

Table 2. Comparison of the performance of algorithms

<i>Algorithm</i>	<i>Test Mode</i>	<i>Number of Correctly Classified Instances</i>	<i>Number of Incorrectly Classified Instances</i>	<i>Accuracy Percentage</i>	<i>Working Duration (sec.)</i>
<i>ZeroR</i>	<i>Cross-Validation (10)</i>	<i>71184</i>	<i>175219</i>	<i>28.8893</i>	<i>0.11</i>
<i>ZeroR</i>	<i>Percentage Split (%66)</i>	<i>24149</i>	<i>59628</i>	<i>28.8253</i>	<i>0.32</i>
<i>OneR</i>	<i>Cross-Validation (10)</i>	<i>72921</i>	<i>173482</i>	<i>29.5942</i>	<i>0.27</i>
<i>OneR</i>	<i>Percentage Split (%66)</i>	<i>24775</i>	<i>59002</i>	<i>29.5726</i>	<i>0.29</i>
<i>Naive Bayes</i>	<i>Cross-Validation (10)</i>	<i>218964</i>	<i>27439</i>	<i>88.8642</i>	<i>0.23</i>
<i>Naive Bayes</i>	<i>Percentage Split (%66)</i>	<i>74489</i>	<i>9288</i>	<i>88.9134</i>	<i>1.60</i>
<i>Bayes Net</i>	<i>Cross-Validation (10)</i>	<i>219059</i>	<i>27344</i>	<i>88.9027</i>	<i>0.67</i>
<i>Bayes Net</i>	<i>Percentage Split (%66)</i>	<i>74547</i>	<i>9230</i>	<i>88.9827</i>	<i>0.94</i>
<i>Decision Stump</i>	<i>Cross-Validation (10)</i>	<i>135467</i>	<i>110936</i>	<i>54.9778</i>	<i>0.31</i>
<i>Decision Stump</i>	<i>Percentage Split (%66)</i>	<i>45982</i>	<i>37795</i>	<i>54.8862</i>	<i>0.16</i>
<i>J48</i>	<i>Cross-Validation (10)</i>	<i>197006</i>	<i>49397</i>	<i>79.9528</i>	<i>1.74</i>
<i>J48</i>	<i>Percentage Split (%66)</i>	<i>75215</i>	<i>8562</i>	<i>89.78</i>	<i>1.50</i>

Naive Bayes and Bayes Net algorithms, on the other hand, make statistical classifications to predict whether the data belong to a certain class or not. These algorithms are very successful in making decisions in uncertain situations [31,32]. The Decision Stump algorithm creates a single-level decision

tree and performs the classification process directly based on a single input feature value [24]. The J48 algorithm is a decision tree algorithm based on ID3 and C4.5 algorithms, and the information gain rate is used as the feature selection criterion in this algorithm [33]. If-Then rules are used in the tree structure and membership function sets are given as output. To create a simple classification model on the data, insignificant branches in the tree are cut by pruning [34].

Data preprocessing, cleaning, reduction, and transformation operations were performed on the data set to use it in algorithm analysis and get more accurate results. Accordingly, a data set with 9 attributes and 246403 rows was obtained. Information about this data set is given in Table 3. Two methods were used while creating the model. First, the Cross-Validation ratio was chosen as 10. Secondly, 66% of the data was used for training the model and the rest of the data was used for testing. These two methods were performed using each classification algorithms. The obtained network flow data were analyzed and compared with the specified algorithms. Information about the number of samples that were classified correctly and incorrectly, the correct classification rates of the algorithms, and the classification time of the algorithms are given in Table 2.

According to the information given in Table 2, the best result was obtained with the J48 algorithm (89.78%), as a result of comparing the accuracy performances of the algorithms used. Accuracy refers to the ratio of data perceived as accurate to the entire test data set. The higher the accuracy value, the more successful the machine learning model is [35]. The lowest accuracy rate was obtained with the ZeroR algorithm (28.8253%). J48 algorithm is the longest-running algorithm to make the classification. ZeroR is the algorithm that makes the classification in the shortest time.

5. EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

In the study, the visual results produced by Weka of the J48 algorithm with which the highest success rate was obtained are examined. The inferences from the reviews are given in this part. The values of each attack class and the methods used are given in Table 3 in detail.

Table 3. Values belonging to the attacks used in visual results

<i>Attack</i>	<i>Number Used in Visual Results</i>	<i>Colour Used in Visual Results</i>	<i>Packet Number</i>	<i>Packet Size (Largest)</i>	<i>Attack Time (sec.)</i>	<i>Maximum Delay Time of Next Packet (sec.)</i>
<i>TCP Flooding-1</i>	1	<i>Dark Blue</i>	25198	110	6.667	0.482
<i>TCP Flooding-2</i>			23557	113	7.994	0.974
<i>Total Packets for TCP Flooding</i>			48755			
<i>Spoofing IP-1</i>	2	<i>Red</i>	37902	182	8.828	0.925
<i>Spoofing IP-2</i>			26449	113	7.123	0.712
<i>Total Packets for Spoofing IP</i>			64351			
<i>SYN Flood with Spoofed IP-1</i>	3	<i>Green</i>	34367	105	10.664	2.056

<i>SYN Flood with Spoofed IP-2</i>			27746	113	6.179	1.712
<i>Total Packets for SYN Flood with Spoofed IP</i>			62113			
<i>UDP Flooding-1</i>			36229	542	13.326	1.789
<i>UDP Flooding-2</i>	4	Blue	34955	298	20.323	3.169
<i>Total Packets for UDP Flooding</i>			71184			
<i>Total Packets for All Attacks</i>			246403			

To be used in visual results, numbers from 1 to 4 were made for TCP Flooding, Spoofing IP, SYN Flood with Spoofed IP, and UDP Flooding, respectively. Besides, coloring was done by indicating the number of packets used in the analysis. The maximum number of packets, packet size, attack time, and delay time were reached with UDP Flooding.

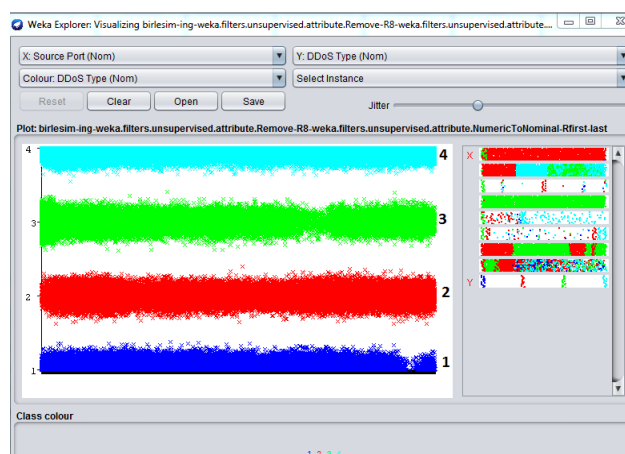


Figure 5. Visual of the source port value

When Figure 5 is examined, it is seen that the source port range of all attacks is very wide and varied. Almost all ports are used for every attack experiment.

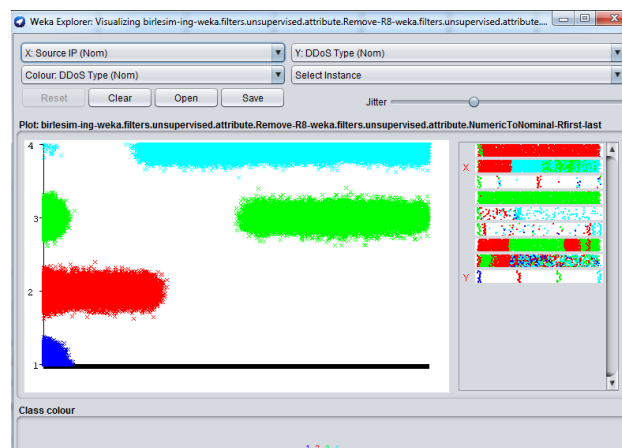


Figure 6. Visual of the source IP value

When we consider the source IPs, it was seen that very few IPs were used in the TCP Flooding. The IP range used in Spoofing IP is narrow. In SYN Flooding and UDP Flooding, the range of source IP used is wide and varied (this is more obvious especially for UDP Flooding).

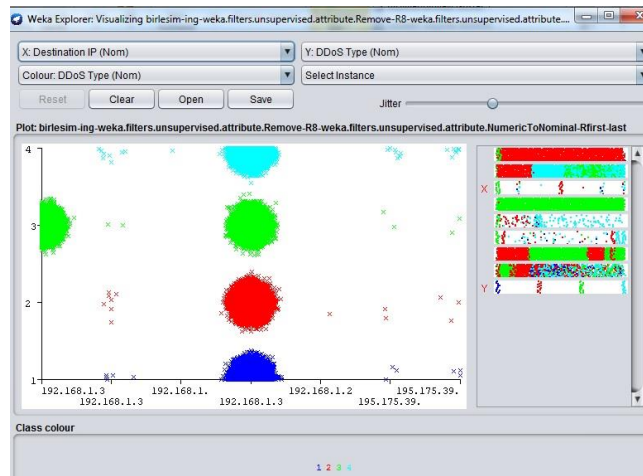


Figure 7. Visual of the destination IP value

The same IP was used as the target in all attack experiments, and the other IPs were rarely used, as can be seen in Figure 7. The target IP range is wider than the others in SYN Flooding.

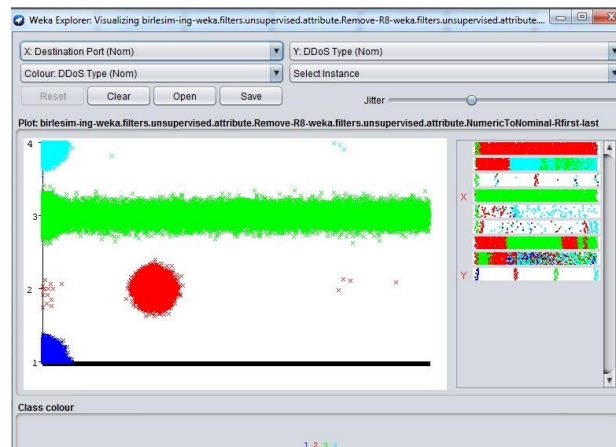


Figure 8. Visual of the destination port value

When we consider the target port, it has been observed that SYN Flooding has used almost all ports. The port range used in TCP and UDP floodings is very narrow and has not varied. In Spoofing IP, the destination port usage is in a wider range and more varied than TCP and UDP Floodings.

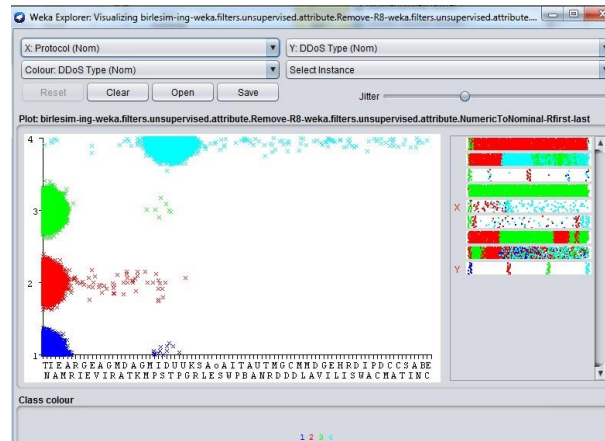


Figure 9. Visual of the protocol value

When we look at the protocols used in the attack experiments, it was seen that the protocols used in UDP Flooding were more and more varied. Protocols such as TCP, UDP, and DNS are frequently used in this attack. TCP Flooding, Spoofing IP, and SYN Flooding used similar protocols. These attacks focused on the TCP protocol and used very few different protocols.

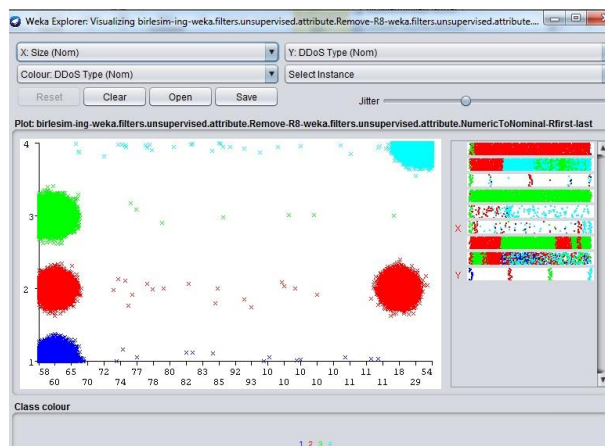


Figure 10. Visual of the size value

Based on Figure 10, it has been concluded that the size of the packet used at once in UDP Flooding is large. Also, a small number of sizes and different sizes were used. In the Spoofing IP, packets with different sizes were used. TCP and SYN Floodings used similar and smaller packet sizes.

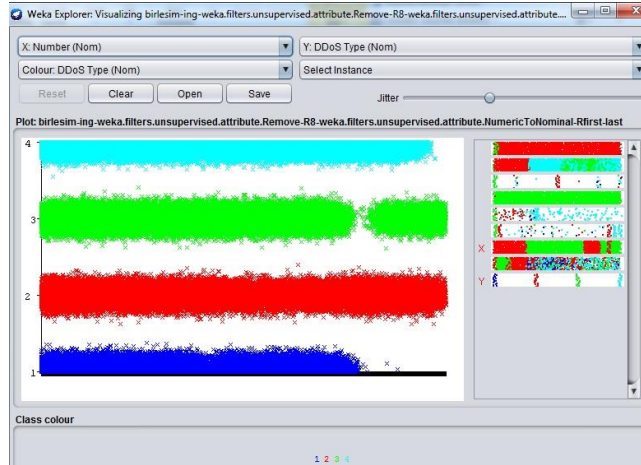


Figure 11. Visual of the number value

When the value of the number of packets obtained in the attack experiments was examined, it was seen that the TCP Flooding had the least number of packets. The other three attacks have several packets that are close to each other.

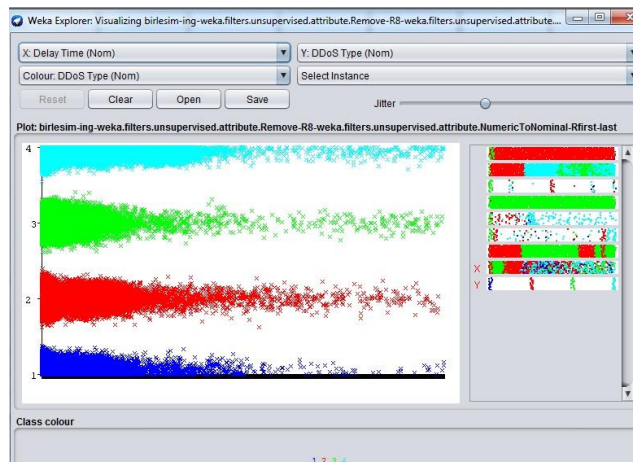


Figure 12. Visual of the delay time value

When the delay time of the packets was examined, the highest values were reached with the UDP Flooding. The SYN Flooding has come in second place. Similar situations were observed for the other two attacks.

6. CONCLUSION

In this study, sample experiments have been performed by considering the important features of DDoS attacks. With these experiments, the attacker reached the target system and performed the desired operations. During these processes, the target system became inoperable and system performance was reduced to a minimum.

The data set was obtained by listening and evaluating the systems where different DDoS attack experiments were performed, and data analysis was performed by applying the selected methods. Different methods have been tried to detect DDoS attack types and the method with the highest result has been examined in detail. Studies have been performed on classification algorithms using the data mining method. According to the studies performed, the highest classification success rate was obtained with the J48 algorithm. The visual results obtained with this algorithm were discussed and detailed information

about the characteristics of each attack type was given. Unlike the studies in the literature [36-38], defining the type of attack and determining its characteristic features have been focused on.

This study on the detection of DDoS attack types applied to any system will be a guide to develop a detection mechanism against attacks. The same detection or protection method will not be the solution for every type of attack. For this reason, it is necessary to develop methods suitable for the type of attack to protect systems and to make quick decisions. With this study, a different perspective and solution are presented for the detection of DDoS attacks. In future studies, it is aimed to consider the normal network data which have not been attacked, to evaluate different features, and to make a more comprehensive analysis.

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