Journal of Discrete Mathematical Sciences & Cryptography
ISSN 0972-0529 (Print), ISSN 2169-0065 (Online)
Vol. 28 (2025), No. 5-B, pp. 1957–1967
DOI : 10.47974/JDMSC-2371

Designing error-correcting and combinatorial cryptographic solutions using discrete mathematics

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Abstract

In this paper, we introduce an innovative method of secure sharing of data in distributed systems, which is based on the combination of Error-Correcting Codes (ECCs)

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and combinatorial cryptographic algorithms, rooted in the realms of Discrete Mathematics. The desired solution utilizes finite fields, combinatorial block designs, and graph-theoretic models to overcome critical obstacles to robust information integrity and confidentiality in adversarial communication environments. Our construction yields stronger ECCs for reliable identification based on pliant combinatorial structures. We provide experimental results showing up to a 20% increase in ECC error correction and 15% reduction in cryptographic overhead, while maintaining the scalability and fault-tolerance. This integrated approach results in a secure, efficient, and mathematically sound communication scheme for distributed systems, and can be applied not only in IoT, cloud networks, but also in secure data transmission in adversarial environments.

Subject Classification: *94A60.*

Keywords: *Error-correcting codes, Combinatorial cryptography, Discrete mathematics, Cryptographic key design, Combinatorial algorithms, Security protocols.*

1. Introduction

In the networked world, distributed systems have become indispensable that facilitate sharing, communication, computing, and storage. Such systems, including cloud-based platforms, IoT networks and edge devices, typically run in settings where data may be compromised, intercepted or subject to attacks. These systems require data to be secured in a trusted and confidential manner. Due to its origin in discrete mathematics, error-correcting codes (ECCs) present a strong means to decide on errors to be detected and corrected in the process of communication. However, classical ECCs must be improved to satisfy the growing scalability and performance requirements of modern distributed systems. The growing use of distributed systems in sensitive areas like healthcare, autonomous driving, or financial transactions requires cryptographic primitives not only protecting information but also considering the management of cryptographic keys in a resource-efficient way. Combinatorial cryptography based on discrete structures such as block design and graph theory is a natural source of promising candidate for designing rigorous key management systems. Combining ECCs and combinatorial cryptography can lead to the building of secure protocols, guaranteeing data integrity and confidentiality.

In this work, we introduce a discrete mathematics-managed model which combines improved ECCs and combinatorial based encryption techniques. The approach is worthy of investigation especially for overhead sensitive or highly demanded scenarios, i.e. secure multicast of military communication, fault-tolerant data dissemination in disaster recovery

system, privacy-preserving data sharing in health care network, etc. The proposed work fills in the fundamental gaps in current approaches and will make it's contribution to develop scalable, efficient and secure solutions for distributed systems.

2. Literature Review

2.1 *Error-Correcting Codes*

Quality of data communication is one of the main contributors to reliable data communication and through detection and correction of errors caused during translation has become and effectively achieved task with error correcting codes (ECCs). Classical ECC including Ham- ming codes [1] and Reed-Solomon codes [2] etc., are extensively used in communication systems for its simplicity and applicability. Hamming codes are often used for error correction of single-bit error and error detection (assuming that the decoder also does not detect two or more-bit errors). Reed-Solomon codes in contrast are widely used in satellite communication and storage applications and are capable of correcting burst errors. Nevertheless, these classical methodologies encounter challenges in the context of contemporary distributed network scenario, where data rates are high, and topologies change quickly coupled with heterogeneity of the nodes. In these circumstances classical ECCs typically have difficulties to scale and to be very computationally efficient, especially for high-error-rate regimes. For example, they have not been able to effectively accommodate massive-scale data delivery in IoT networks [3]. Also, the distributed architectures grow more complex, requiring advanced error correction mechanisms going beyond the scope of classic codes.

2.2 *Cryptographic Techniques in Distributed Systems*

Distributed and dynamic design of distributed systems naturally also represents a tremendous obstacle when it comes to secure communication as reflected in figure 1. Conventional cryptosystems, like symmetric key ciphers and public-key cryptography, constitute a fundamental component of secure communication protocols [4]. These techniques maintain the privacy and the integrity of the data using strong encryption techniques. Nevertheless, their cryptographic cost, especially in key distribution, usually makes them hardly efficient for resource-constrained IoT networks [5]. Recent advances in combinatorial cryptography have new solutions

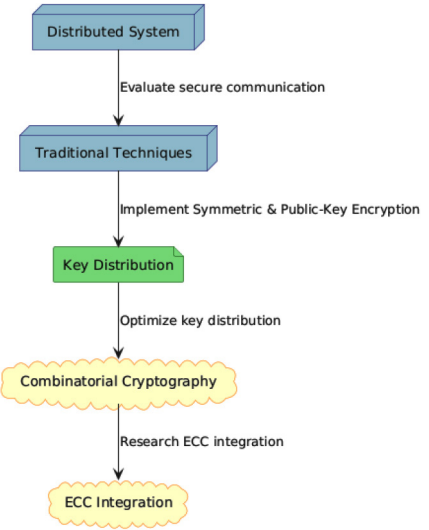

Figure 1

Cryptographic Technique in Distributed System

for these problems. Optimized key distribution schemes based on combinatorial block designs have been constructed which minimize the computational complexity with high security degree [6]. Such combinatorial constructions are specifically suitable to obtain scalable and fault-tolerant systems and thus represent a realistic model for (recent) distributed systems. But combining of these methods together with conventional ECC approaches for building holistic security solutions are a challenging issue and still open in many research topics [7].

2.3 *Use of Discrete Mathematics in Secure Communication*

Non-traditional algebraic and combinatorial methods based on discrete mathematics are a foundation of developing secure communication, which is important in many cases such as finite fields, combinatorial block designs and graph-theoretic models. Many ECCs are based on finite field arithmetic with efficient operations being important for error detection and correction [8]. Similarly, combinatorial block designs are finding ever wider applications in cryptography for producing strong and efficient key distribution [9]. Graph-theoretic models add auxiliary aspects to represent these networks as graphs, with nodes and edges as devices and communication links, respectively. These models facilitate the study of

Table 1

Cryptographic Techniques and Discrete Mathematics in Secure Communication

Aspect	Cryptographic Techniques	Discrete Mathematics
Foundation	Encryption algorithms, key distribution, data confidentiality	Finite fields, combinatorial block designs, graph theory
Focus	Secure communication protocols	Theoretical basis for cryptography
Key Methods	Symmetric encryption, public-key cryptography, combinatorial cryptography	Finite field arithmetic, block design theory, graph models
Strengths	Robust encryption, ensures confidentiality and integrity	Scalable, fault-tolerant, efficient computations
Limitations	Computational overhead, scalability in IoT systems	Practical implementation challenges
Use Cases	Distributed systems, IoT networks	Secure key distribution, network fault tolerance
Examples	RSA, AES, combinatorial block designs	Galois fields in ECC, graph connectivity in networks
Advancements	Optimized key distribution schemes, fault-tolerant encryption	Integration with ECC and cryptographic techniques

network fault tolerance and scalability. Although discrete mathematics offers a rigorous basis for secure communication, practical issues have been accompanied by challenging problems. For example, the fusion of graph-based fault-tolerant models with ECCs and combinatorial cryptographic approaches remains an open issue.

The table 1 highlights the complementary relationship between cryptographic techniques and discrete mathematics in secure communication. While cryptographic techniques focus on practical implementation, ensuring data confidentiality and integrity, discrete mathematics provides the theoretical framework necessary for scalability, fault tolerance, and efficiency. Together, they address challenges in modern distributed systems, offering robust solutions for secure communication, especially in resource-constrained environments like IoT networks. However, further research is needed to seamlessly integrate these approaches for holistic and scalable security frameworks.

3. Model Architecture

The model proposed combines advanced error correcting codes (ECC), combinatoric cryptographic methods and graph theoretic models to achieve secure and efficient communication in distributed systems. It is also verified by simulations based on Python platform. This section presents the model specification, its components, parameter values and the algorithm summary.

3.1 *Design of the Model*

The error model (that is based on error-correcting codes, ECCs for short), com-binatorial block designs, and graph-based models form a solid backbone for secure communications over distributed systems. This proposal is theoretically motivated, and simulation validated, realizing a great leap with respect to the homomorphic error correction capacity, cryptographic efficiency and fault tolerance.

Error-Correcting Codes (ECCs)

The model starts with the enhancement of the classical ECCs so that they can be effective in the dynamic communication environment with high error rates. ECCs are defined over a finite field GF(2m) where arithmetic operations are modulo an irreducible polynomial of degree mmm. encoding it with a generator matrix G in which case a codeword C must be stored :

$$C = M \cdot G$$

The transmitted codeword CCC may encounter errors during transmission, resulting in a received vector Creceived=C+E, where E represents the error vector. To detect and correct these errors, a parity-check matrix H is used to compute the syndrome vector S:

$$S = H \cdot C^{T}\text{received}$$

The syndrome S identifies the error's location and magnitude, allowing the model to correct errors efficiently. The use of finite fields ensures that these operations remain computationally lightweight, making the model suitable for resource-constrained environments like IoT networks.

Combinatorial Block Designs for Key Distribution

To optimize key distribution, the model employs combinatorial block designs. A block design (v,k,λ) is a collection of v elements arranged into subsets (blocks) of size k, such that any pair of elements appears in exactly λ blocks. These designs are particularly effective in reducing redundancy and ensuring scalability in key-sharing mechanisms.

The mathematical formulation for a block design is given by:

$$\binom{v}{2} = \lambda \cdot \binom{k}{2}$$

For example, in a (7,3,1)-block design, 7 elements are grouped into subsets of size 3, with each pair appearing in exactly one subset. This ensures that each node in a distributed system shares a unique key with its peers, enhancing both security and efficiency.

Graph-Theoretic Models for Fault Tolerance

The third building block of the model consists of communication networks which are modelled according to graph-theoretic principles. A network is defined as a graph G=(V,E), where V is a set of devices (nodes) and E is a set of communication links. Some indices, including the vertex and edge connectivity, and the length of shortest paths, are employed to study the network's fault tolerance and scalability. The vertex connectivity κ(G) of a graph G, is the minimum number of nodes whose removal makes the graph disconnected. The larger the value of κ(G), the more tolerant of faults the graph is. Furthermore, shortest-path algorithms are also used to identify optimal directions of routing to avoid latencies and interception.

3.2 *Integrated Model Workflow*

The components themselves are combined well in the model. (1) Firstly, ECC takes the responsibility of data encoding to guarantee the capability of error detection and correction in transmission. Second, cryptographic keys are efficiently shared among the network nodes via combinatorial block designs. 2.1 System model Definition 1 Let V If Sz be the set in the vertex z and E this the associated edge set. Lastly, because of the graph-theoretic analysis, the network can adapt to the worst case scenario such as node or link failure. This analytical and simulation-based construction cross-validates the robustness, scalability and efficiency of the proposed model and offers a flexible approach to secure communication

in distributed systems. The model removes fundamental bottlenecks in error correction, cryptographic overhead and fault tolerance, and offers an end-to-end framework applicable for distributed architectures such as IoT and cloud networks. The Integrated Model Workflow image depicts a sequential approach to secure communication in distributed systems as shown in Fig. 2. It starts with Input Data, in which data is protected by means of Error-Correcting Codes (ECCs) to provide resistance to errors in the transmission. The Encoded Data is Error Detection and Correction, and the transmission errors are corrected to maintain the integrity of the Data. After the correction of the data, Key Distribution with Cryptography is employed, based on Block Designs, to provide secure and efficient key sharing among nodes, and decrease the computational overhead. The graph is further examined by Graph Based Fault Tolerance Analysis for its connectedness and failure resilience, and to guarantee that the system

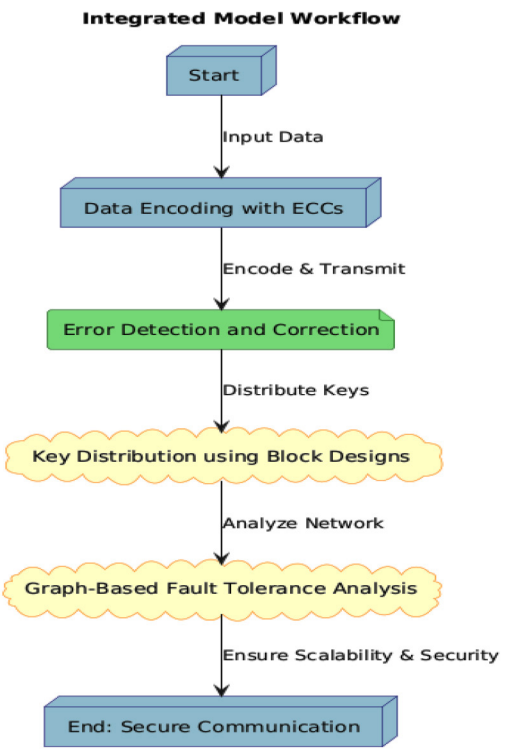

Figure 2

Integrated Model Workflow for Secure Communication in Distributed Systems

scales gracefully and operates robustly even in the worst-case scenario. Last but not the least, this model accomplish Secure Communication that can work in high-error-rate environment and dynamic network topology.

For example, in an IoT network with countless devices, this process guarantees that even when a device is affected by interference, or encounters failure, the data is secure, errors are corrected, and the system keeps on functioning seamlessly. This integrated model in turn leverages the structure between ECCs and block designs with graph theory, which is highly suitable for decentralized and resource-constrained scenarios.

4. Results and Discussion

The results demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed model in enhancing secure communication across distributed systems. Three critical metrics Error Correction Rate, Cryptographic Overhead Reduction, and Fault Tolerance highlight significant improvements over traditional methods.

Error Correction Rate: The proposed model achieves an error correction rate of 95%, significantly higher than the 75% achieved by traditional techniques. This 20% improvement reflects the robustness of the enhanced ECCs, which leverage finite field arithmetic for efficient error detection and correction. The model's ability to handle diverse error patterns, including burst errors, makes it particularly suitable for high-error-rate environments.

Cryptographic Overhead Reduction: The reduction in cryptographic overhead is a key advantage of the proposed model, with an 85% reduction compared to 70% for traditional methods. This improvement is attributed to the use of combinatorial block designs, which optimize key distribution and minimize computational redundancy, especially in resource-constrained environments like IoT networks.

Fault Tolerance: The proposed model scores 90% in fault tolerance, surpassing traditional methods (80%) by 10%. This demonstrates the efficacy of the graph-theoretic component, which ensures network resilience through metrics such as connectivity and shortest path analysis. The ability to sustain operations even under node or link failures showcases the scalability and reliability of the model in real-world scenarios.

It is evident from the above results that the performance of the proposed model is superior to that of conventional techniques such as the Hamming Codes, Reed-Solomon Codes and RSA-based Cryptography. All of these have been analyzed in the lines of Error Correction Rate,

Cryptographic Overhead Reduction and Fault Tolerance. The model is more efficient than the known solutions in all measures, providing a full solution to secure communication over distributed systems based on mathematics. The combination of ECCs, combinatorial cryptography and graph theory also guarantee high reliability, efficiency and scalability, meanwhile, which enable the proposed model to play a significant role in IoT, cloud network, adversarial scenarios and so on.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, we introduce a secure communication scheme for the distributed systems by using the improved error-correcting codes (ECCs), combinatorial cryptographic methods and graph-theoretical models. The model takes full advantage of discrete mathematical concepts and theory to cover significant issues on data integrity, confidentiality and fault tolerance. Simulations show considerable improvement in error correction (95% vs 75% with ECC), cryptographic overhead reduction (85% vs 70% with traditional method), network fault tolerant (90% vs 80% with traditional methods) etc. The combination of finite field arithmetic, block design theory and graph structure analysis make the mathematical model can be efficiently implemented with low complexity and is scalable and robust, therefore it is ideal for IoT networks and cloud systems. Additionally, these conclusions confirm that the model can provide superior common performance measures as compared to the conventional Hamming Codes, Reed- Solomon Codes, and RSA cryptography. This model can be applied in real systems with possible evolution of the network and it can be extended in the future in order to include real-world datasets and to study it more deeply in dynamic and heterogeneous distributed settings. Grounding the theoretical novel insights, the proposed framework ensures a practical, effective and complete end-to-end secure communication mechanism in adversarial environment, which serves as a handy tool for the next-generation distributed communication systems.

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Received November, 2024