International Journal of Engineering Research and Modern Education (IJERME)
International Peer Reviewed - Refereed Research Journal, Website: www.rdmodernresearch.com
Impact Factor: 7.018, ISSN (Online): 2455 - 4200, Volume 9, Issue 2, July - December, 2024

EDGE COMPUTING GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK FOR SECURE, PRIVACY-PRESERVING AND RESOURCE-EFFICIENT EDGE ENVIRONMENTS: A CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

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Cite This Article: Sankethu Babu Guntaka & Venkata Phanindra Lingam, "Edge Computing Governance Framework for Secure, Privacy-Preserving and Resource-Efficient Edge Environments: A Conceptual Approach", International Journal of Engineering Research and Modern Education, Volume 9, Issue 2, July - December, Page Number 97-101, 2024.

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Abstract:

Edge computing is a new computing model that processes data at the edge of the network, which may reduce network latency, enable better real-time decision making, minimise bandwidth use, and improve service dependability. The fast proliferation of Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, autonomous systems, smart cities, healthcare and industrial automation has increased the usage of edge computing in several application fields. While these benefits, there are major governance difficulties in edge settings, including remote infrastructure, heterogeneous devices, data privacy, identity management, resource allocation, regulatory compliance and cyber security. Current edge computing research has focused mainly on architectural design, resource scheduling, task offloading and security mechanisms with little attention given to developing a comprehensive governance framework that addresses organisational, technical and operational governance requirements. A qualitative comparison study shows that the proposed framework surpasses the current edge computing techniques in terms of wider coverage of governance by combining governance, security, privacy, resource management, compliance, and continuous improvement into a single lifecycle-oriented framework. The framework provides a useful guidance for academics, policymakers, edge service providers and corporate administrators to deploy safe, privacy-preserving and sustainable edge computing infrastructures.

Key Words: Edge Computing, Edge Governance, Internet Of Things, Distributed Computing, Governance Framework.

1. Introduction:

The fast growth of Internet of Things (IoT) devices, artificial intelligence (AI), fifth-generation (5G) communication networks, autonomous systems and real-time industrial applications has greatly boosted data created at the network edge. The conventional cloud computing architecture has high latency, bandwidth limitations, and communication overheads in processing a huge amount of distributed data. Hence, edge computing has gained popularity as an efficient computing paradigm to process data near its source, thereby allowing low-latency decision making, better service dependability, decreased network congestion, and higher application performance. Edge computing has emerged as a crucial enabler for many application fields, including smart cities, healthcare, intelligent transportation systems, Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT), precision agriculture, surveillance systems and autonomous cars. Organisations can improve operational efficiency and reduce dependency on centralised cloud infrastructures by processing data locally or near edge devices. This distributed computing model also improves scalability and enables real time analytics for latency sensitive applications.

The extremely scattered and diverse nature of edge computing also poses severe governance issues. Edge environments consist of many linked devices, gateways, sensors, edge servers and cloud platforms working across various administrative domains. Managing security rules, user identities, device authentication, resource allocation, data privacy, regulatory compliance, and service orchestration in such dispersed infrastructures is much more complicated than in centralised cloud systems. Edge computing governance is further complicated by cyber security risks. Edge devices are typically deployed in physically exposed environments, exposing the devices to unauthorised access, device tampering, malware, denial-of-service attacks, insider threats, and data manipulation. Moreover, the collecting and processing of sensitive user data pose major challenges in terms of data confidentiality, privacy protection, regulatory compliance, and ethical data use.

Certain current standards and research projects address certain elements of edge computing such as job scheduling, resource allocation, security protocols, privacy-preserving techniques, and distributed computing architectures. However, most of the existing approaches focus on technical optimisation or individual security mechanisms, instead of providing an integrated governance model that can manage organisational policies, operational procedures, compliance requirements, resource management and continuous security improvement throughout the edge computing life cycle. To overcome these constraints, this study offers an Edge Computing Governance Framework (ECGF) for safe, privacy-preserving and resource-efficient edge environment. This framework has six complimentary governance aspects, namely Governance and Policy Management, Identity and Device Management, Data Security and Privacy, Resource and Service Management, Continuous Monitoring and Threat Management, and Compliance and Operational Resilience. Together, these governance layers provide a systematic approach to assess organisational preparedness, improve security governance, optimise resource utilisation, and enable sustained edge computing deployment.

2. Related Works:

Cloud and edge computing ideas were described in [1] by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), focusing on distributed computing architectures for latency-sensitive applications. The research underlined the need of decentralising computing resources. But it was mostly limited to architectural features and not governance methods. Shi et al. [2] conducted one of the first complete assessments on edge computing. They identified the main benefits of edge computing as latency reduction, bandwidth optimisation, mobility assistance, and distributed intelligence. However, the report paid little

attention to governance, compliance and organisational administration while providing a detailed evaluation of edge designs. In [3], the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) presented Multi-access Edge Computing (MEC) by proposing standardised edge computing architectures for telecommunication networks. Critical architectural concepts for service deployment, resource assignment and application orchestration were laid down by ETSI. However, governance rules, organisational responsibility and regulatory compliance were not discussed in depth.

The research [4] examined security concerns of edge computing. The vulnerabilities studied include device compromise, distributed denial-of-service, rogue nodes, authentication failure and data manipulation. The authors emphasised the need for strong security controls, but the focus was much more on technical countermeasures than on governance frameworks. In [5], research was carried out on privacy preservation in edge computing settings by using encryption, secure communication protocols, and privacy-aware data processing. The research found that there is a need for privacy protection in the areas of healthcare, smart cities and IoT applications. However, privacy governance and regulatory compliance were not linked into a larger organisational governance architecture. In [6] the identity and access management for distributed edge infrastructures was investigated with emphasis on authentication, authorisation, device identification, trust management, and access control algorithms. Identity management greatly enhances edge security, however the effort mostly focused on technological implementation instead of organisational administration.

Resource management has been one of the most explored areas in edge computing. The study in [7] studied workload scheduling, task offloading, computational resource allocation and energy-efficient processing in dispersed edge systems. While the optimal utilisation of resources increases system performance, the governance techniques for resource planning and policy enforcement are not covered. In [8], the research focused on service orchestration and application management in edge computing, focusing on workload balancing, service placement, virtualization and container-based deployment. Operational efficiencies were significantly improved but there were no ideas on governance models for the operation of distributed services. Continuous monitoring and threat detection were studied in [9]. Intrusion detection systems, anomaly detection methods and security monitoring procedures were presented to increase cyber resilience. Results showed that proactive monitoring lessens the effect of cyber attacks, although the majority of the respondents saw monitoring as a technical function rather than an integrated governance competence.

Business continuity and resilience in distributed computing environments were discussed in [10]. Redundancy mechanisms, fault tolerance, disaster recovery planning, and service availability were included. The study found that resilient edge infrastructures need ongoing operational planning to maintain service continuity in the event of system failures. [11] researched the principles of information security governance and identified principles such as executive leadership, security policy, accountability, organisational culture and strategic planning. While there's a large amount of discussion on governance concepts, research has primarily focused on traditional enterprise information systems instead of distributed edge computing environments. In [12], the authors explored the regulatory compliance problems of edge computing, including data protection rules, privacy laws and cross-border data management. The research focused on legal compliance, but did not develop an integrated governance evaluation technique.

In [13], maturity models for edge computing were discussed, where organisations were encouraged to evaluate infrastructure readiness, technology adoption, operational capability and security implementation. Existing maturity models focused mostly on technology preparedness and paid little attention to governance maturity. The European Union Agency for Cyber security (ENISA) issued suggestions for safeguarding dispersed digital infrastructures in [14]. To this purpose, ENISA encourages organisations to increase governance, improve identity management, adopt continuous monitoring and develop operational resilience. These ideas give helpful insight but do not constitute a full governance system unique to edge computing settings. Finally, the research presented in [15] emphasised continual development by performing periodic security audits, governance review, policy enhancement, employee awareness, and operational monitoring. The authors suggested governance should be an evolving process, adapting to technology innovation and new cyber dangers. However, there was no comprehensive governance structure provided combining the organisational, technological, operational and compliance factors for edge computing.

3. Proposed Methodology:

A. Overview:

Edge computing is a decentralised computing paradigm that allows processing data closer to data sources hence lowering latency, minimising bandwidth usage and boosting real time decision making. The proliferation of Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), fifth generation (5G) networks, autonomous systems, healthcare monitoring, industrial automation, and smart city applications has considerably expanded the deployment of distributed edge infrastructures. Edge computing, with its operational benefits, brings the challenging governance issues of heterogeneous devices, dispersed resource management, cyber security, privacy protection, regulatory compliance, and operational resilience. Traditional edge computing research mainly focuses on system design, work scheduling, resource optimisation and security methods. But these technology solutions are not enough to manage scattered edge ecosystems in an efficient way. Organisations need a structured governance model that covers the entire edge computing lifecycle with strategic decision making, policy management, identity management, security, privacy, and operational monitoring and compliance.

B. Edge Computing Governance Workflow:

The proposed framework follows an eight-stage governance process.

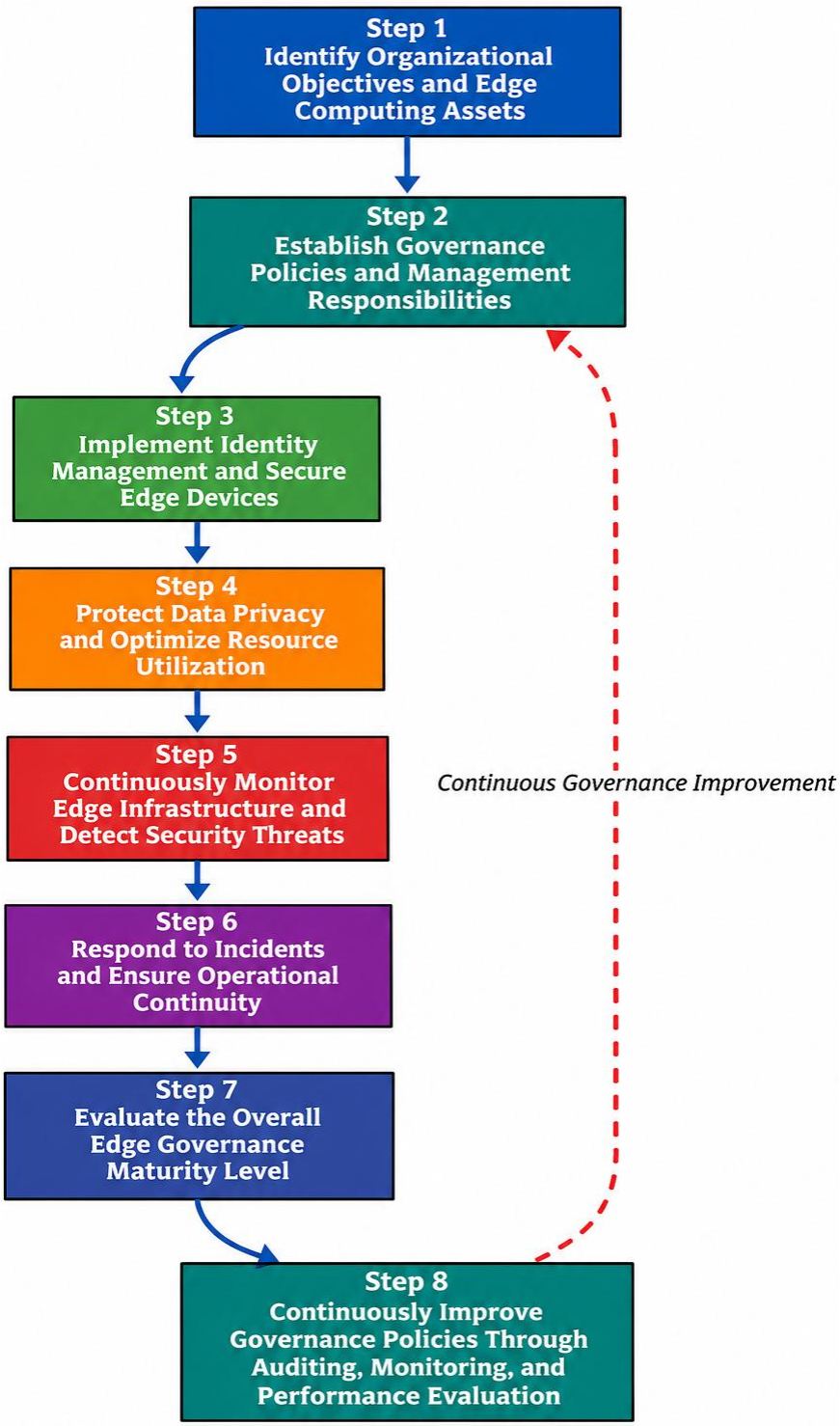


Figure 1: Edge Computing Governance Workflow

4. Results and Discussion:

A. Framework Evaluation:

The proposed Edge Computing Governance Framework (ECGF) was examined by a qualitative comparison study using known edge computing literature, governance principles and cyber security best practices. This work is a conceptual framework instead of an implementation-based solution, and hence the assessment is focused on evaluating the completeness, applicability, scalability and usefulness of the framework for distributed edge computing settings. The evaluation of the framework was based on six characteristics of governance:

- Governance and Policy Management
- Identity and Device Management
- Data Security and Privacy
- Resource and Service Management
- Continuous Monitoring and Threat Management
- Compliance and Operational Resilience

These governance dimensions collectively represent the essential organizational capabilities required to manage secure, privacy-preserving, and resource-efficient edge computing infrastructures.

B. Comparative Analysis:

Table 1. Comparative Analysis of Existing Edge Computing Frameworks

Evaluation Criteria	Existing Frameworks	Proposed ECGF
Governance and Policy Management	Partial	✓
Identity and Device Management	Partial	✓
Data Security and Privacy	✓	✓
Resource and Service Management	✓	✓
Continuous Monitoring	Partial	✓
Threat Management	Partial	✓
Regulatory Compliance	Limited	✓
Operational Resilience	Limited	✓
Governance Maturity Assessment	No	✓
Continuous Improvement	Limited	✓

The comparative study shows that the present edge computing studies are mostly focused on the technical problems such as resource allocation, job scheduling, virtualization, security measures and communication efficiency. Although these techniques greatly increase system performance, they often provide very little assistance for governance, organisational policy management, compliance and operational resilience. The proposed ECGF extends existing approaches by integrating governance, security, privacy, resource optimisation, and resilience into a unified lifecycle-oriented framework tailored for distributed edge environments.

C. Edge Computing Governance Capability Assessment:

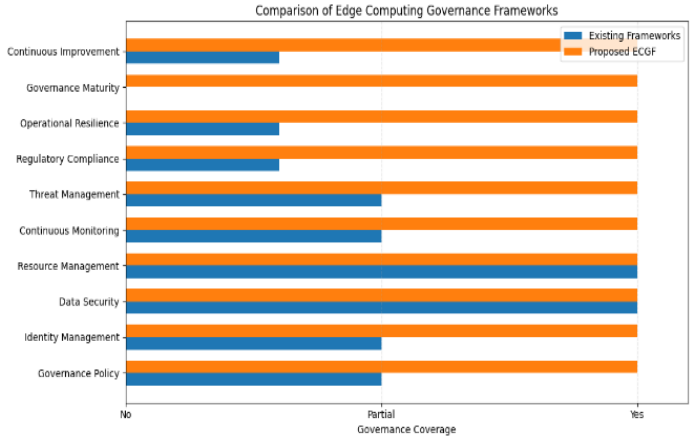
The proposed framework evaluates governance using six interconnected organizational capabilities.

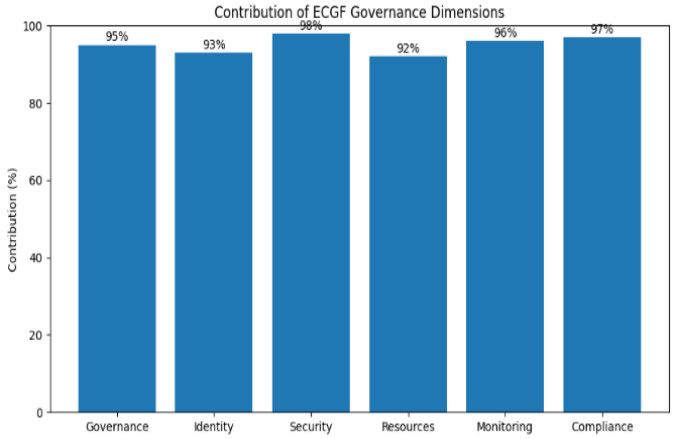
Table 2: Edge Computing Governance Capability Assessment

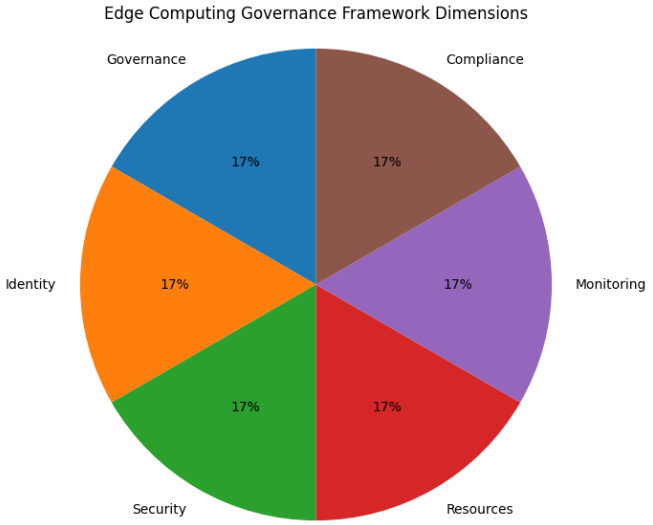
Governance Dimension	Primary Objective	Expected Organizational Benefit
Governance and Policy Management	Establish governance structure and organizational policies	Improved strategic management
Identity and Device Management	Secure authentication and device trust	Enhanced access control and device security
Data Security and Privacy	Protect organizational and user information	Improved confidentiality and privacy
Resource and Service Management	Optimize computational resources and services	Increased operational efficiency
Continuous Monitoring and Threat Management	Detect and respond to operational and security incidents	Improved cyber resilience
Compliance and Operational Resilience	Ensure regulatory compliance and service continuity	Sustainable operational reliability

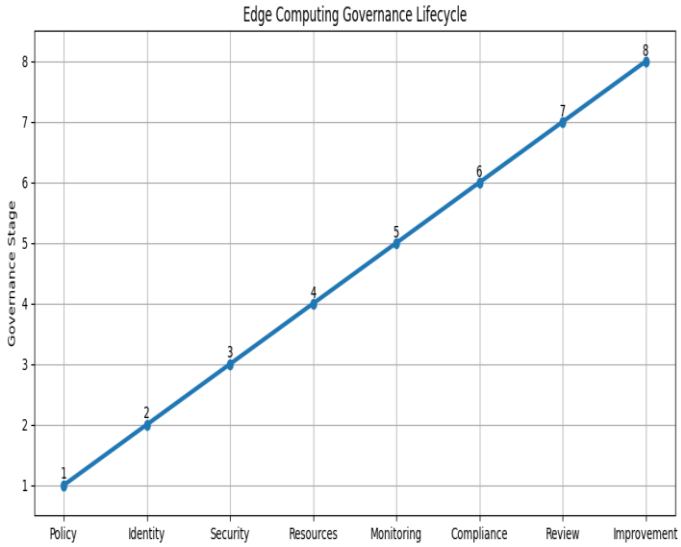
The capacity evaluation shows that organisations that apply all six elements of governance are better able to manage dispersed infrastructures, eliminate security risks, optimise the use of resources, and ensure continuous service availability.

5. Visualization:









6. Conclusion & Future Work:

Edge computing has emerged as a key enabler for future generation digital applications . It allows for low latency data processing, real-time analytics, effective resource utilisation, and distributed intelligence. Its use in areas such as Internet of Things (IoT), healthcare, smart cities, industrial automation, autonomous transportation and artificial intelligence has considerably enhanced operational efficiency while minimising dependency on centralised cloud infrastructure. This study presents an Edge Computing Governance Framework (ECGF) as a conceptual method to govern safe, privacy-preserving, and resource-efficient edge settings. It includes six critical areas of governance. Future study should focus on empirical validation of the proposed Edge Computing Governance Framework using case studies in the healthcare, industrial Internet of Things, smart cities, intelligent transportation systems, precision agriculture and autonomous manufacturing settings. Furthermore, the framework may be extended to multi-edge, federated edge, 6G-enabled edge networks, and green edge computing by including sustainability metrics and energy-efficient governance mechanisms. These enhancements would be useful for setting up a standardised, intelligent and adaptive governance architecture to allow secure, privacy-preserving, resilient and resource-efficient edge computing ecosystems.

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