

Intelligent Monitoring of Microservices via Logs, Metrics, and Traces

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Abstract: *Microservices architectures enable scalable and modular system design; however, their distributed topology significantly complicates real-time observability and root cause analysis [8]. Each service generates isolated telemetry signals—logs, metrics, and traces—resulting in fragmented visibility and elevated Mean Time to Resolution (MTTR). This paper pro-poses a unified, open-source observability framework leveraging OpenTelemetry, Fluent Bit, Prometheus, Jaeger, OpenSearch, and Grafana to perform intelligent aggregation, correlation, and Machine Learning (ML)-based anomaly detection across all telemetry streams. The multi-tier architecture transitions traditional reactive monitoring into proactive fault prediction, thereby reducing Mean Time to Detect (MTTD) and MTTR while enhancing system reliability in cloud-native and hybrid environments. The primary contribution is the intelligent fusion of logs, metrics, and traces to construct a comprehensive cause-to-effect diagnostic narrative for preemptive failure mitigation.*

Keywords: Microservices, observability, logs, metrics, traces, OpenTelemetry, anomaly detection, distributed tracing, cloud-native, Prometheus, OpenSearch.

I. INTRODUCTION

Microservices have emerged as the dominant paradigm for constructing scalable and maintainable distributed applications [8]. Each service operates au-tonomously, supports independent deployment, and contributes to overall system resilience. However, the proliferation of services introduces significant operational complexity. The volume and heterogene-ity of telemetry data—performance metrics, event logs, and execution traces—scale exponentially with system size, overwhelming traditional monitoring ap-proaches. Observability refers to the ability to infer internal system states from externally emitted telemetry signals. These signals are categorized into three primary types:

- Metrics: Time-series aggregates representing resource utilization, latency, error rates, and throughput—suitable for threshold-based alert-ing.
- Logs: Structured or unstructured event records providing granular execution context for foren-sic analysis.
- Traces: Distributed execution paths that recon-struct request propagation across service bound-aries, exposing latency bottlenecks and failure propagation [3].

Conventional monitoring systems treat these signals in isolation, rely on static thresholds, and lack adapt-ability to dynamic cloud environments [10]. This paper presents a unified observability framework that integrates all three telemetry types into a coherent diagnostic pipeline, enabling proactive anomaly de-tection and automated root cause analysis.



II. OBJECTIVES AND UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION

II-A. Project Objectives

- 1) Aggregate and correlate logs, metrics, and traces from all microservices into centralized storage and analysis platforms to eliminate data silos and enable unified telemetry processing .
- 2) Automatically infer and visualize inter-service dependencies to enable rapid root cause analysis (RCA) of cascading failures through comprehensive dependency mapping [3].
- 3) Standardize telemetry instrumentation using OpenTelemetry to ensure vendor-agnostic data correlation, context propagation, and interoperability across heterogeneous environments [12].

II-B. What's Unique

While existing solutions typically address individual observability pillars, this framework introduces a Unified Observability Plane through end-to-end integration of logs, metrics, and traces. The core innovation lies in the ML-driven anomaly detection module, which learns baseline behavioral patterns and identifies deviations without requiring labeled training data [4]. This enables correlation of metric anomalies (e.g., CPU saturation) with corresponding traces (e.g., service-level bottlenecks) and log events (e.g., configuration errors), constructing a complete causal chain for each incident [2]. The system transitions from reactive incident response to predictive system health management, significantly reducing Mean Time to Detect (MTTD) and Mean Time to Resolution (MTTR).

III. UNIFIED OBSERVABILITY FRAMEWORK

Our framework leverages a 100% open-source technical stack, engineered to overcome the data fragmentation inherent in microservices. Refer to Fig. 1.

III-A. Data Generation and Collection Layer

This layer is responsible for instrumenting microservices and reliably collecting raw telemetry with minimal performance overhead.

- Instrumentation (OpenTelemetry): Microservices are instrumented using

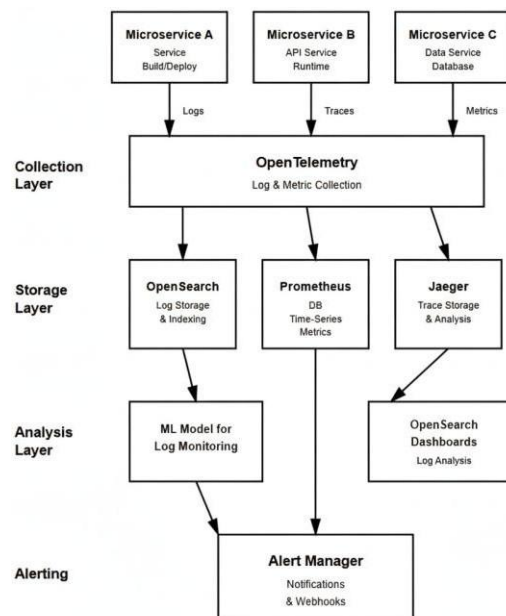


Figure 1. Architecture: Layered unified observability for microservices



OpenTelemetry (OTel) SDKs, which provide a unified set of APIs for generating all three telemetry signals (logs, metrics, and traces) [12]. OTel is critical for injecting correlation IDs (Trace IDs) into log and metric data, enabling the later correlation across the entire stack.

- **Metrics (Prometheus):** Microservice endpoints expose metrics in a standard format, which the Prometheus server actively scrapes at regular intervals. Prometheus is chosen for its native efficiency with time-series data and powerful PromQL query language .
- **Logs (Fluent Bit):** The highly lightweight and resource-efficient Fluent Bit log forwarder collects logs from service containers/hosts and reliably transmits them to the storage layer .
- **Traces (OpenTelemetry Collector):** OTel agents capture the distributed trace data and export it via the OTLP protocol to the OTel Collector, which then forwards the traces to Jaeger [3].

III-B. Storage Layer

Specialized backends are utilized to handle the unique indexing and querying requirements of each data type.

- **Logs (OpenSearch):** Logs are indexed in OpenSearch, a scalable, open-source search and analytics suite, enabling full-text search, aggregation, and rapid querying of high-volume log data . Each log record is stored in a structured JSON format to allow efficient parsing and correlation across services. A typical log entry may look like:

```
{
  "timestamp": "2025-10-31T13:42:15Z",
  "service": "payment-service",
  "level": "ERROR",
  "request_id":
    "d8f9a2b1-239f-4df6-a83c-23fd09bde77f",
  "message": "Transaction timeout
    while connecting to user-service",
  "trace_id": "alb2c3d4e5f6"
}
```

These logs enable the system to correlate events across distributed services using identifiers such as trace_id or request_id. OpenSearch indexes each field for efficient querying, making it possible to execute advanced searches (e.g., find all ERROR logs for a specific service within a given time range). For anomaly detection, logs are analyzed for sudden surges in specific error messages or rare event patterns. Machine learning-based log template analysis or sequence modeling can highlight anomalies such as recurring timeout errors or missing log sequences.

- **Metrics (Prometheus DB):** The built-in Time-Series Database (TSDB) provides long-term retention and fast querying capabilities specifically optimized for metric data, supporting high-cardinality label sets. Each metric is stored as a time-series of time-stamped numerical values with identifying labels. A typical metric might look like:

```
http_request_duration_seconds{
  service="checkout",
  instance="node-3",
  method="POST",
  status="200"
} 0.354 @2025-10-31T13:42:15Z
```

Metrics capture both system-level (CPU, memory, I/O) and application-level (latency, error rate, throughput) indicators. For anomaly detection, PromQL queries combined with algorithms such as z-score analysis, moving averages, ARIMA, or LSTM-based forecasting can identify deviations in expected trends. For instance, a sudden rise in http_request_error_rate beyond a defined threshold may signal abnormal service behavior.

- **Traces (Jaeger):** Jaeger stores and indexes distributed traces, using OpenSearch as a backend for high-volume and efficient searching of spans based on service name, duration, and tags [3]. Each trace consists of multiple spans that represent operations across services. A span typically looks like:



```
{
  "trace_id":      "a1b2c3d4e5f6",
  "span_id":       "s1234567",
  "parent_span_id": "root",
  "service":       "order-service",
  "operation":     "validateOrder",
  "start_time":    "2025-10-31T13:42:15Z",
  "duration_ms":   132,
  "tags": {
    "http.method": "POST",
    "http.status_code": 500,
    "error": true
  }
}
```

Traces provide an end-to-end view of request execution paths. For anomaly detection, latency outliers, missing spans, or abnormal dependency patterns can reveal issues such as bottlenecks or cascading failures. Graph-based analysis or temporal comparisons across spans can detect deviations from typical call hierarchies or timing distributions. By correlating logs, metrics, and traces, a multi-modal anomaly detection pipeline can be established. For example, simultaneous spikes in error-rate metrics, unusual ERROR logs, and increased trace latency across dependent services strongly indicate systemic failures or configuration regressions.

IV. ANALYSIS, CORRELATION, AND ANOMALY DETECTION

IV-A. Unified Correlation and Visualization

The Analysis Layer ensures that all telemetry is consumable through a single pane of glass, facilitating seamless navigation from high-level symptoms to low-level causes.

- **Grafana (Metrics + Logs + Traces):** Grafana acts as the unified dashboard layer, connecting directly to Prometheus (metrics) and OpenSearch (logs). Crucially, Grafana can integrate with Jaeger (traces) to display distributed trace links directly alongside metric graphs, allowing engineers to “drill down” from a latency spike on a metric chart into the specific traces that caused it.
- **OpenSearch Dashboards (Log Analysis):** Provides specialized tools for querying, visualizing, and performing statistical analysis (e.g., log clustering) directly on the raw log data.

IV-B. Proactive ML Anomaly Detection

The ML Anomaly Detection module is a separate service that ingests data from the Storage Layer (primarily OpenSearch and Prometheus) and applies intelligence to spot subtle deviations that evade static thresholds.

1) ML Methodology

The problem of detecting novel failures in a dynamic system is best addressed by Unsupervised Learning techniques, which require no pre-labeled incident data [4].

- **Time-Series Anomaly (Metrics):** For critical metrics (e.g., P99 Latency, Error Rate), models like LSTM Autoencoders are trained on historical data to learn the normal sequence and temporal correlations. Deviations from the expected reconstructed values flag anomalies [2].
- **Pattern Anomaly (Logs):** Log data is processed using Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques, such as clustering (e.g., Isolation Forest applied to log vectors) to identify a sudden shift in the frequency or emergence of rare log messages, indicating a new failure mode.
- **Trace/Dependency Anomaly:** The module analyzes the statistical properties of traces (e.g., standard deviation of span duration, abnormal service call patterns) to detect slow memory leaks or connection pool saturation before they become a critical failure [1].



2) Alerting and Remediation

Once an anomaly is detected, the module generates a rich, context-aware alert that is routed to the Alert Manager. This centralized component handles deduplication, grouping, and escalation policy (e.g., paging the Site Reliability Engineering (SRE) team). The alert contains not only the symptom (e.g., "Latent Anomaly Detected in Service A") but also correlated metadata (e.g., the specific trace_id of the first anomalous request) to accelerate RCA [5].

V. DISCUSSION AND IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS

V-A. Implementation Stack Summary

The entire framework is constructed using highly mature open-source projects under the Cloud Native Computing Foundation (CNCF) umbrella, ensuring high performance and community support. Table III details the components.

V-B. Challenges and Limitations

While powerful, implementing intelligent observability presents challenges:

- **Data Volume and Cardinality:** The sheer volume of telemetry data, particularly logs and high-cardinality traces, demands aggressive sampling strategies and scalable storage backends to manage costs and performance [11].
- **Model Drift:** ML models must be continually retrained to adapt to the dynamic nature of microservices (e.g., new deployments, feature releases), preventing models from becoming obsolete and generating false positives.
- **The Cost of Monitoring (Instrumentation Overhead):** The tools we use to track the system (OpenTelemetry) can actually slow the system down if not configured carefully. This instrumentation overhead adds non-trivial latency and consumes CPU in performance-sensitive services, forcing us to maintain tight control over how much data we capture (via sampling rates) [12].

VI. CONCLUSION

Recent studies have highlighted the growing importance of unified observability and anomaly detection in complex microservice systems. Xie et al.

[1] and Liu et al. [4] demonstrate that traditional point-wise methods often fail to capture inter-service dependencies, advocating for group-wise and service-level analysis to improve accuracy and scalability.

Similarly, Wang et al. [2] and Ikram et al. [5] emphasize the effectiveness of multi-modal telemetry and causal discovery in improving root cause localization and reducing false positives. These advancements collectively underline that a cohesive, cross-layer observability approach is essential for achieving reliability and resilience in distributed microservices. Building on these insights, the proposed framework integrates OpenTelemetry, Prometheus, OpenSearch, Jaeger, and Grafana into a unified observability stack that correlates metrics, logs, and traces in real time. By incorporating machine learning-based anomaly detection across telemetry signals, the system can proactively identify abnormal behaviors and performance bottlenecks before service degradation occurs. This integration bridges the gap between raw observability data and actionable insight, advancing toward self-healing and autonomously managed microservice environments that enhance performance visibility, fault detection, and operational intelligence.

VII. FUTURE SCOPE

The next phase of this research will focus on dramatically advancing the intelligence layer to move beyond detection and into full autonomy and actionable insights.

- **Explaining the "Why" (Explainable AI (XAI)) :** We plan to integrate technology that doesn't just flag a problem, but tells the engineer exactly why it happened in plain English. For example: "The performance drop started in Service C (Trace ID XXX) because we saw a sudden surge of database connection errors in the logs (Log ID YYY)."
- **Self-Driving Troubleshooting (Automated RCA):** We will build causal inference algorithms that automatically trace a failure back to its single, originating service (the first domino to fall), even in complex cascading failures, eliminating manual investigation time [5].



- Predictive Self-Healing (Adaptive Scaling): By connecting our anomaly predictions directly to Kubernetes autoscaling, we can enable services to automatically scale up in anticipation of pre-dicted load spikes, proactively preventing fail-ures before they even start [10].

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Table I. Summary of Related Work on Observability and Anomaly Detection in Microservices

Sr.	Title	Author(s)	Year	Methodology	Features / Key Findings
1	From Point-wise to Group-wise: A Fast and Accurate Microservice Trace Anomaly Detection Approach	Zhe Xie, Changhua Pei, Wanxue Li, Huai Jiang, Liangfei Su, Jianhui Li, Gaogang Xie, Dan Pei	2023	Group-wise trace anomaly detection for microservices, leveraging deep learning-based log analysis and graph methods for improved accuracy and speed	Improves detection accuracy/ef-ficiency, adapts to microservice scalability, enhances reliability insights
2	Root-Cause Metric Location for Microservice Systems via Log Anomaly Detection	Lingzhi Wang, Nengwen Zhao, Junjie Chen, Pinnong Li, Wenchi Zhang, Kaixin Sui	2020	Combines DeepLog-based log anomaly detection and mutual information-based robust correlation analysis; includes data augmentation	Achieves top-15 accuracy for root-cause identification, outperforms prior methods in accuracy and speed, validated on TrainTicket benchmark
3	Graph-Based Trace Analysis for Microservice Architecture Understanding and Problem Diagnosis	Xiaofeng Guo, Xin Peng, Hanzhang Wang, Wanxue Li, Huai Jiang, Dan Ding, Tao Xie, Liangfei Su	2020	GMTA system uses graph-based rep-resentation for efficient trace analysis, storage, access, and anomaly detection in microservices	Enables real-time architecture insight and root-cause diagnosis; supports vi-sualization and analytics of dependen-cies and error propagations
4	Unsupervised Detection of Microservice Trace Anomalies through Service-Level Deep Bayesian Networks (TraceAnomaly)	Ping Liu, Haowen Xu, Qianyu Ouyang, Rui Jiao, Zhekang Chen, Xiaoying Bai, Shenglin Zhang, Jiahai Yang, Linlin Mo, Jice Zeng, Wenman Xue, Dan Pei	2020	TraceAnomaly uses deep Bayesian networks and handcrafted service-level trace vectors for unsupervised anomaly detection/localization	Precision/recall above 0.97, outper-forms rule-based/ML baselines, de-ployed successfully for industrial trace anomaly localization
5	Root Cause Analysis of Fail-ures in Microservices through Causal Discovery (RCD)	Azam Ikram, Sarthak Chakraborty, Subrata Mitra, Shiv Kumar Saini, Saurabh Bagchi, Murat Kocaoglu	2022	RCD: scalable algorithm combining observational and interventional data for efficient causal graph-based failure root cause detection	Higher top-k recall and speed over PC/AutoMAP/CIRCA; robust on syn-thetic, testbed, and real cloud failures



6	Challenges and Solution Directions of Microservice Architectures: A Systematic Literature Review	Mehmet Sylemez, Bedir Tekinerdogan, Ar-Aya Koluksa Tarhan	2022	Systematic Literature Review (SLR) analyzing 85 primary studies from an initial pool of 3,842 papers	Identifies and organizes architectural challenges into 9 categories and 40 sub-categories, providing mapped solution directions.
7	Containerization in Multi-Cloud Environment: Roles, Strategies, Challenges, and Solutions for Effective Implementation	Muhammad Waseem, Aakash Ahmad, Peng Liang, Muhammad Azeem Akbar, Arif Ali Khan, Iftikhar Ahmad, Manu Setl, Tommi Mikkonen	2025	Systematic Mapping Study of 121 papers (2013-2024)	Identifies Multi-Cloud Container Monitoring and Adaptation as leading theme; catalogs challenges, solutions, patterns, and strategies.
8	Observability, Profiling, and Debugging in Systems Conference 2015-2025	Not specified	2025	Survey of top-tier systems conference papers (OSDI, SOSP, EuroSys) over 10 years	Traces evolution from ad-hoc observability to always-on frameworks. Identifies overhead-insight trade-off and data deluge as open challenges.
9	Building an Observable System Based on OpenTelemetry	Xi-Zhen Wang, Chien-Chao Tseng	2024	Implements observability system with OpenTelemetry using hook-based, minimally intrusive instrumentation for PHP	Demonstrates OpenTelemetry extends traditional monitoring, capturing contextual and event-based paths.

Table II. Summary of Related Work on Observability and Anomaly Detection in Microservices

Sr.	Title	Author(s)	Year	Methodology	Features / Key Findings
10	Metrics, Logs, and Traces: Unified Observability	Bhosale	2022	Integrates Prometheus, ElasticSearch, Jaeger; uses tagging, dashboards	Faster RCA, reduced debugging time; promotes OpenTelemetry standardization
11	AI for Microservice Monitoring	Podduturi	2025	AI/ML with deep learning, clustering, reinforcement learning	Enhances real-time monitoring, reduces downtime; addresses data quality
12	Integrated Approach for Logging and Monitoring	Devarakonda	2020	Distributed tracing, ELK/Loki, Prometheus/Grafana, ML anomaly detection	High ingestion, low latency; optimizes resources, response times [17]
13	Observability in Large-Scale Microservices	Madupati	2023	Uses Prometheus, Grafana, Jaeger for health monitoring	Addresses data overload, instrumentation; ensures stability, scalability



Table III. Open-Source Stack Details

Pillar	Tool	Function
Logs	Fluent Bit	Lightweight log forwarder with efficient data collection and real-time processing capabilities
	OpenSearch	Scalable log storage and indexing with advanced search, analytics features, and robust performance
Metrics	Prometheus	Time-series scraper and database with powerful querying and alerting functionalities
	Grafana	Visualization and dashboarding with customizable panels and real-time data integration
Traces	OpenTelemetry	Unified instrumentation standard for distributed tracing and monitoring across services
	Jaeger	Distributed trace storage and analysis with detailed performance insights and latency tracking
Intelligent Analysis	ML Service	Anomaly detection (Python/PyTorch) with machine learning models for predictive analytics and root cause analysis

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