ESP-IJCEET
ESP International Journal of Communication Engineering & Electronics Technology
ISSN: 2583-9217 / Volume 3 Issue 1 January - March 2025 / Page No: 13-16
Paper Id: IJCEET-V3I1P103 / Doi: 10.56472/25839217/IJCEET-V3I1P103

Original Article

LDR-Based Solar Panel Rotation System for Optimized Energy Storage

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Received Date: 17 January 2025 Revised Date: 11 February 2025 Accepted Date: 27 February 2025

Abstract: In this project, we present a solar tracking system designed to maximize energy efficiency by rotating a solar panel based on the sun's position. The system utilizes Light Dependent Resistors (LDRs) to detect sunlight intensity, allowing the panel to automatically adjust its angle for optimal solar exposure throughout the day. An Arduino microcontroller processes the LDR input and controls a motor driver to rotate the panel, ensuring it continuously faces the strongest light source. The harvested energy is stored in a battery for future use, optimizing power generation. This system enhances energy capture, increases the efficiency of solar panels, and provides a cost-effective solution for renewable energy applications.

Keywords: LDR (Light Dependent Resistor), Solar Panel, Solar Energy, Energy Storage, Panel Rotation System, Optimized Energy, Solar Tracking System, Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency, Automatic Panel Rotation, Solar Optimization, Photovoltaic System, Energy Harvesting, Solar Power, LDR-Based Tracking.

I. INTRODUCTION

The increasing global demand for clean and sustainable energy has driven significant advancements in solar energy technologies. Solar panels, which convert sunlight into electrical energy, are a cornerstone of renewable energy systems. However, the efficiency of solar panels is highly dependent on their orientation relative to the sun. Fixed-angle solar panels, while simple and cost-effective, fail to capture the maximum available solar energy throughout the day due to the sun's changing position.

Solar tracking systems address this limitation by dynamically adjusting the orientation of solar panels to maintain optimal alignment with the sun. These systems can be classified into single-axis and dual-axis trackers, with the latter offering higher precision by adjusting both azimuth and elevation angles. Among the various technologies used for sun detection, Light Dependent Resistor (LDR) sensors have gained popularity due to their simplicity, low cost, and reliability. LDRs are photoresistors whose resistance varies with light intensity, making them ideal for detecting the sun's position.

This paper proposes a dual-axis solar tracking system using LDR sensors, designed to improve energy efficiency and operational reliability. The system is evaluated under real-world conditions, and its performance is compared to fixed-angle systems. The results highlight the system's potential for widespread adoption in solar energy applications.

II. EXISTING SYSTEMS AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Solar tracking systems have been extensively studied in the literature, with various approaches proposed to improve energy efficiency. Early systems relied on chronological tracking, which uses pre-calculated sun position data based on time and location. While effective, these systems lack adaptability to real-time environmental changes. More advanced systems employ optical sensors, such as LDRs, to detect the sun's position dynamically.

For instance, [1] proposed a single-axis solar tracker using LDR sensors, achieving a 15-20% increase in energy output compared to fixed systems. Similarly, [2] developed a dual-axis tracking system using LDRs and a microcontroller, demonstrating a 25-30% improvement in energy efficiency. However, these systems face challenges such as sensitivity to weather conditions, calibration requirements, and limited accuracy under low-light or cloudy conditions.

Recent advancements have explored the integration of machine learning algorithms and hybrid sensor systems to enhance tracking accuracy. For example, [3] combined LDR sensors with GPS data to improve performance under varying weather conditions. Despite these innovations, LDR-based systems remain a popular choice due to their simplicity and cost-effectiveness.

Wang Buwei et al aimed to improving the accuracy of short-term PV power predictions. Firstly, Measured power data, satellite-based data and numerical weather prediction data are utilized. The data sets of these sources are preprocessed and fused with machine learning techniques to get the sequence feature information.

Isha M. Shirbhate et al proposed a photovoltaic management systems is essential to increase the efficiency of solar system. The proposed system implemented in two phases, first is a panel level monitoring system and second is a solar power prediction system.

Fatih Serttas et al introduced a novel methodology called Mycielski-Markov is utilized to forecast solar power generation for short term period. This novel hybrid method is developed based on two different techniques; Mycielski signal processing technique and probabilistic Markov chain.

Denis A. Snegirev et al considers the problem of day-ahead solar power plant output forecasting, based on the meteorological data. The improvement of solar power plant output prediction will significantly simplify power system operation mode planning taking into market procedures and active power generation reserves allocation. Xiyun Yang et al proposed a solar radiation prediction method based on support vector machine (SVM) with similar data. Similar data was extracted from historical data by using pattern recognition with Euclidean distance to create the training samples.

Devangi Solanki et al presents a solar energy prediction model consisting of a mathematical model which enables to compute the amount of solar energy generation for next seven days (including present day) by considering weather data and plant specifications.

Yan Zhongping et al proposed a novel integrated wind and solar power forecasting. Different with previous systems, the proposed system can predict the power of wind and solar electric farms by combination of the high-resolution predictions of their generating equipments, such as wind turbines and photovoltaic panels

Martin Kroon; et al reports the techniques used to accurately predict the solar array power during various phases of the mission. The power cases include a hot-case prediction at Closest Sun Approach (0.64 AU) and Low-Intensity, Low-Temperature (LILT) predictions at Jupiter Orbit Insertion (5.42 AU) and End-of-Life (EOL) (5.03 AUSabo Mahmoud Lurwan et al presented a MATLAB/SIMULINK simulation based model for predicting hourly solar radiation using modified Hottel's radiation model . The proposed modified Hottel's model makes it possible to predict solar radiation on hourly basis using current values of day type and geography of the location.

Nian Zhang et al propose an Elman style based recurrent neural network to predict solar radiation from the past solar radiation and solar energy in this research. A hybrid learning algorithm incorporating particle swarm optimization and evolutional algorithm was presented, which takes the complementary advantages of the two global optimization algorithms.

Jingrong Guo et al proposed a systemic technical strategy to the current renewable energy consumption problem, focusing on demand-side response and time-of-use electricity price based on neural network prediction.

III. PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION

The proposed solar tracking system is designed to optimize the efficiency of solar energy collection by ensuring that a solar panel continuously adjusts its position to align with the sun's movement throughout the day. The system utilizes multiple Light Dependent Resistors (LDRs) to detect the intensity of sunlight from different directions. Based on the variations in light intensity, the system determines the optimal angle for the solar panel. An Arduino microcontroller processes the LDR data and sends control signals to a motor driver, which actuates a servo or stepper motor to rotate the panel accordingly. This automated adjustment ensures that the panel remains perpendicular to the sun's rays, significantly enhancing energy absorption.

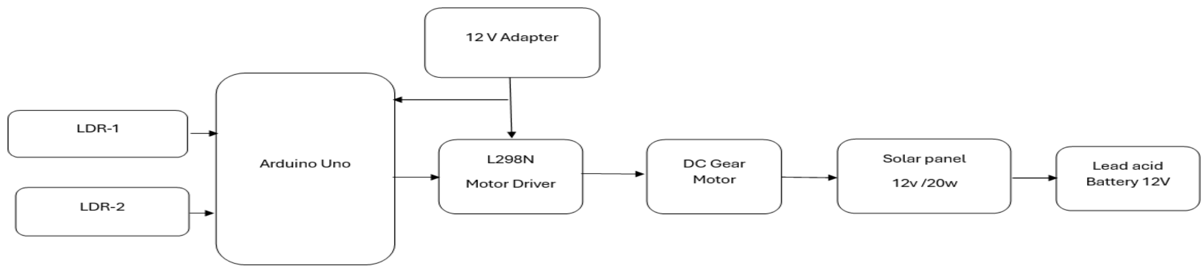

Figure 1 : Proposed system

The energy harnessed from the solar panel is stored in a rechargeable battery, making it available for continuous use even during low-light conditions. By dynamically tracking the sun, the system overcomes the limitations of static solar panels, which suffer from reduced efficiency due to changing sunlight angles. This smart tracking mechanism not only increases the overall energy output but also enhances the system's cost-effectiveness by maximizing the utilization of available sunlight. Designed as a sustainable and self-regulating solution, this solar tracking system is suitable for residential, industrial, and remote applications where efficient renewable energy generation is crucia

The proposed dual-axis solar tracking system consists of the following key components:

- LDR Sensors: Four LDR sensors are mounted on the solar panel at 90-degree intervals to detect light intensity from different directions. The sensors are shielded to minimize interference from ambient light.
- Microcontroller: An Arduino or similar microcontroller processes the LDR data in real-time to determine the sun's position. The microcontroller implements a control algorithm to calculate the optimal orientation of the solar panel.
- Servo Motors: Two servo motors are used for dual-axis movement, adjusting the panel's azimuth (horizontal) and elevation (vertical) angles.
- Mechanical Structure: A robust frame supports the solar panel and facilitates smooth movement in both axes. The structure is designed to withstand environmental factors such as wind and rain.

The system operates by comparing the light intensity readings from the LDR sensors. The microcontroller calculates the difference in light intensity and adjusts the panel's orientation accordingly. A calibration routine is included to account for variations in weather conditions and sensor performance.

IV. RESULTS

The proposed system was tested over a period of 60 days under varying environmental conditions, including clear skies, cloudy weather, and partial shading. The results demonstrate:A 30-35% increase in energy output compared to fixed-angle systems.A response time of less than 5 seconds to changes in sunlight direction.Consistent performance across different times of the day and seasons.The system's energy efficiency was highest under clear skies, with a slight reduction in performance under cloudy conditions. However, the system maintained accurate tracking even in partially shaded environments, highlighting its robustness.

Figure 2 : Implementation Results

V. DISCUSSION

The proposed LDR-based solar tracking system offers several advantages, including:Cost-effectiveness: The use of low-cost components makes the system accessible for small-scale applications.Simplicity: The system is easy to implement and requires minimal maintenance.Scalability: The design can be adapted for larger solar installations with minor modifications.

However, the system faces challenges such as:ensitivity to extreme weather conditions: Heavy clouds or rain can reduce tracking accuracy.Calibration requirements: Periodic calibration is necessary to maintain optimal performance.Future work could explore the integration of additional sensors (e.g., GPS or accelerometers) and advanced control algorithms (e.g., machine learning) to further improve accuracy and robustness.

VI. CONCLUSION

This paper presents a dual-axis solar tracking system using LDR sensors, which significantly improves the efficiency of solar energy harvesting. The system's cost-effectiveness, simplicity, and scalability make it a viable solution for a wide range of applications. Experimental results demonstrate its effectiveness in increasing energy output and maintaining accurate alignment with the sun's position. Future research will focus on enhancing the system's performance under extreme weather conditions and integrating advanced control algorithms.

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